

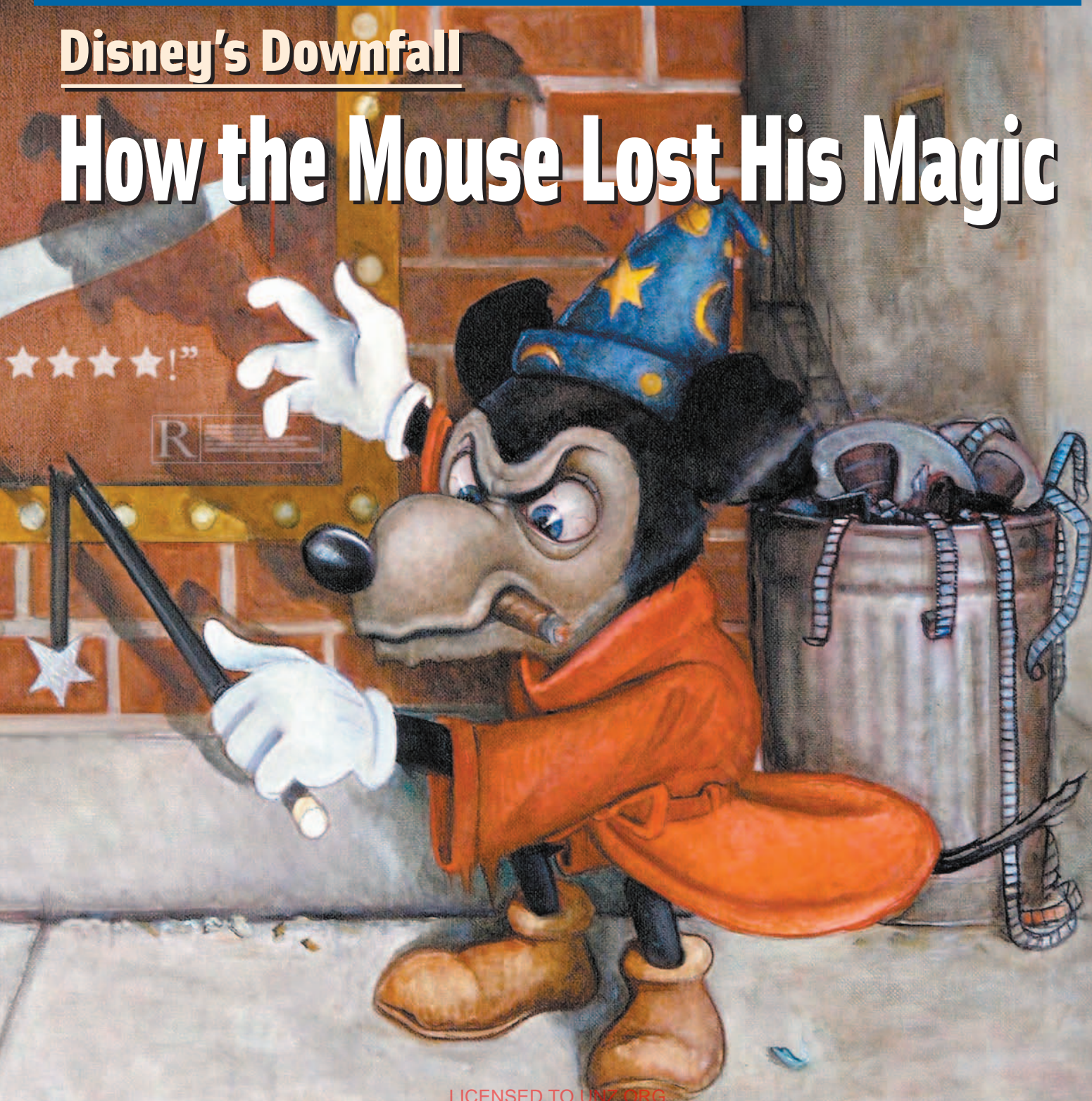
BUCHAREST BATHHOUSE ■ IMPORTING MISOGYNY ■ PALESTINE'S CHRISTIANS

MAY 24, 2004

The American Conservative

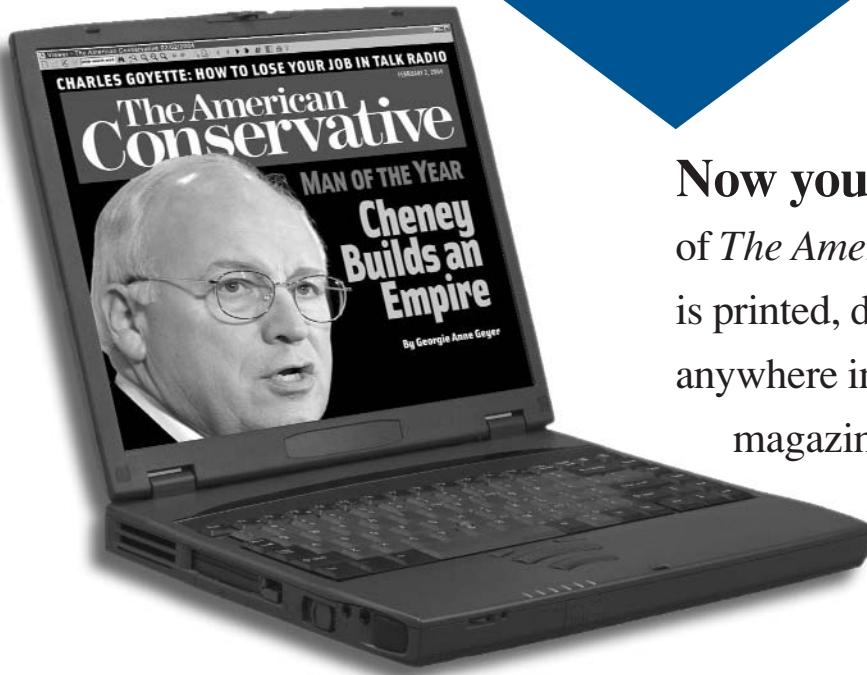
Disney's Downfall

How the Mouse Lost His Magic



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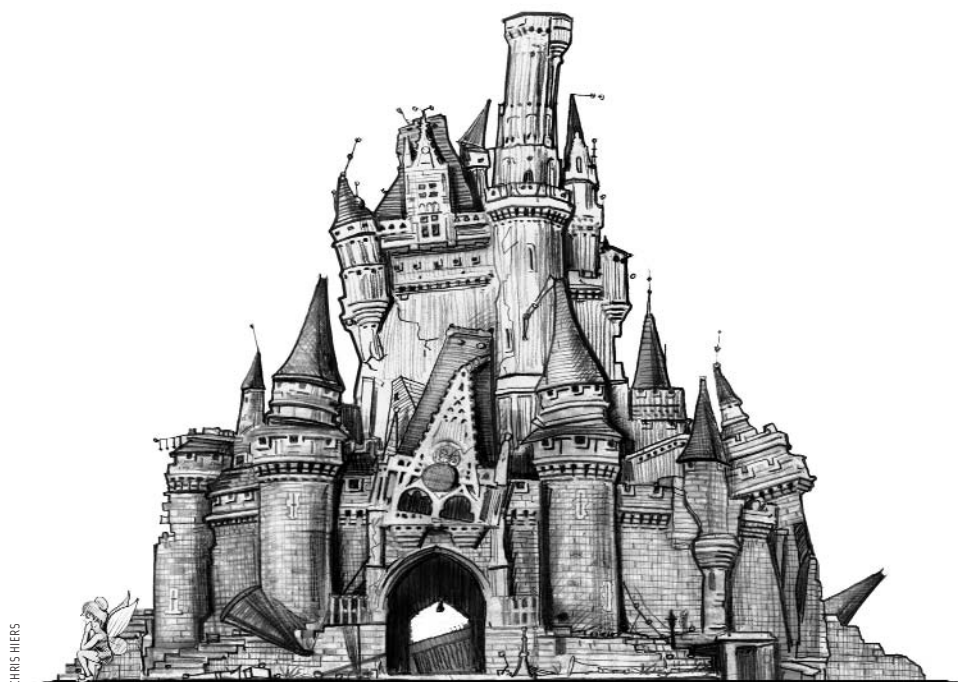
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[CULTURE]

MYOPIA GIRLS GO TO THE MALL

Take a Pepto-pink t-shirt, add a liberal measure of girl power, multiply by several hundred thousand, pour onto the National Mall, and you have ... a stunning lack of perspective. "We are determined to stop this war on women," Feminist Majority president Eleanor Smeal told those gathered for the breathlessly entitled March to Save Women's Lives.

Now there's much for Ms. Smeal to criticize about this administration—we're well practiced at cataloguing its transgressions—but to the disappointment of conservatives, George W. Bush hasn't been a pro-life champion. (Nods to "education" and "equality" notwithstanding, neither of these non-issues filled the buses that clogged our capital last weekend. Abortion remains the sacrament of the women's movement.)

Yes, Eleanor, there is a war on, but it's not being waged against people in pink shirts. Pack the Mall to decry the loss of American lives to an elective conflict. Line the streets to condemn policies that have sullied our reputation in the world. But don't summon the masses and assemble the news crews for your imagined assault on a non-existent "right."

Open secret: the real reason the coat-hanger crowd came to Washington wasn't to "save lives"—just the opposite—and it wasn't because of some White House offensive against women. A recent study found that 55 percent of freshmen at more than 400 universities said abortion should be legal, down from 64 percent a decade earlier. Feminists know that they're losing the next generation and figured the only way to rally support was to declare war on themselves. In so doing, they betrayed not only the insecurity of their movement, but its myopia to a world truly at war. Pack up the coat-hangers, ladies. Think Lysistrata.



'WOW, I CAN HARDLY WAIT FOR YOU TO START DRIVING ON YOUR OWN JUNE 30...'

CAG LEIRION www.caglecartoons.com

[DIPLOMACY]

OSAMA SAYS

Dramatically bad news from Iraq nearly eclipsed President Bush's embrace of Ariel Sharon's land grab. But Bush's decision to stand beside Sharon and assert that Israel could annex some of the West Bank land it seized in 1967 shocked the Middle East. In an afternoon, Bush effectively abandoned 40 years of American diplomacy, dropping the long-term effort to serve as an honest mediator between Israelis and Palestinians, and endorsed the legitimacy of changing international boundaries through war.

The immediate diplomatic repercussions included a formal denunciation of the Bush stance by the European Union and by Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak and the cancellation of a scheduled visit by Jordan's King Abdullah. Sharon took advantage of the meeting by sending Apache gunships to kill Hamas leader Abdel Aziz Rantisi, with timing that implied to all the world that the U.S. endorsed Israel's assassination policies.

It's not just the Bush-Sharon meeting. In his rhetoric, Bush now goes out of his way to make the American image like that of Israel. Gone from presidential talking points are the (discredited) claims of connections between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda. Replacing them are

words that link the Iraqi resistance to Palestinian groups fighting Israel.

But while Osama bin Laden has never been widely popular in the Arab world, the Palestinian struggle against the Israeli occupation is. To the extent that America is linked in Arab sentiment, no policies the United States puts forward will be perceived a legitimate. And support for anti-American terror will only grow wider.

Prior to the Iraq invasion, an antiwar group ran newspaper ads showing Osama bin Laden saying, "I want you to invade Iraq." Bush duly did so, and Osama's popularity grew throughout the Muslim world. The second installment might have Osama saying to Bush, "I want you to tie yourself to Ariel Sharon, so your occupation will be as hated as Israel's." But who would have thought Bush would actually follow such advice?

[ALLIES]

NOT THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE

Call it the new domino effect. Just as cheerleaders for the Iraq War predicted, Saddam Hussein was only the first to go. Toppling him has set off a chain reaction, and democracy has now brought a new wave of regime change. Only it hasn't happened in the Middle East—it's happened among those countries that supported the war.

Our friends at the *Weekly Standard* might want to rethink their enthusiasm for the *vox populi*. When the people—in this case, the peoples of America’s coalition of the willing—speak, what they say is, “Hell no, we won’t go!” First there was Spain, which booted Bush’s ally Jose Maria Aznar’s Popular Party in favor of Socialist Jose Zapatero, who promised to withdraw Spanish troops from Iraq. Then, just a few weeks later, elections in South Korea saw the most pro-war party, the Grand National Party, reduced to a rump. And for the first time the left-wing Democratic Labor Party, which calls both for withdrawing from the Iraq coalition and for throwing U.S. troops out of the Korean peninsula, won several seats in the legislature.

Silvio Berlusconi may be fingering his collar at this point, and Tony Blair has much to worry about—not that he might lose to Britain’s hapless Tories, but he could be dumped by his own party for an antiwar leader. At a stroke, the electoral hopes of liberals and the far-left around the world have been revived, and they have President Bush to thank.

[IMMIGRATION] **DEATH WISH**

New York Times readers were treated to an inadvertent seminar on the suicide of the West last week. First, a front-page story on how Osama bin Laden’s call for *jihād* is resonating among thousands of young Muslims in Britain, France, Germany, and elsewhere in Europe. Many of these would-be jihadis were born in Europe and thus are a walking refutation of the foolish multiculti immigration ideology.

And then, just adjacent, a small article about French rightist Jean-Marie Le Pen’s visit to Northern England, where he tried to give a news conference in ethnically torn Manchester. Le Pen’s appearance got the British *bien-pensants* roiled up, and they threw eggs and

garbage at the perennial (and sometimes quite successful) French presidential candidate.

You don’t have to endorse Le Pen or the British National Party, which hosted his Manchester visit, to recognize the presence of something approaching a cultural death wish in this juxtaposition. While Muslim clerics use the sanctuary of the mosque in Western Europe to recruit terrorists to depose Europe’s democratic leaders and impose Islamic rule, Europeans are busy throwing eggs at the very politicians who warned most loudly against bringing Muslim immigrants to Europe in the first place.

[POLITICS]

HILLARY WITH MONEY

A friend from Miami Beach writes of a “very successful” John Kerry fundraiser he attended:

“Should JFK II be elected, his wife, Teresa H. Kerry, could very quickly transmogrify into a cult figure rivaling Eva Peron. Teresa was center stage, speaking Spanish, talking about being an immigrant from Africa and about how America should bring hope to the world. (Kind of a variation of the neo-conservative vagary about spreading democracy and freedom, and you see where that has got us.) Before she spoke, JFK II gave his wife a brief introduction, pointing out how, as the wife of the late Senator Heinz, Teresa went to Moscow on behalf of a committee for Soviet Jewry. So all the hot buttons were pushed: the Hispanic button, the immigrant button, the African-American button, the Jewish button ...

“Before John and Teresa made their appearance, Sen. Bob Graham made some eye-opening statements about how Teresa was going to be John’s chief advisor. If she is going to get out in front like this, maybe her financial and medical records should be made public after all, like the other principals.” ■

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SMELLING ALLEGORY

Joseph Pearce's fine appreciation of the *Lord of the Rings*'s creator (April 26) was marred only by his insistence on an allegorical interpretation of the book. Tolkien had a life-long, deep-seated distrust of allegory, which he once expressed summarily, "I dislike allegory wherever I smell it." The best presentation of his own aesthetic theory is in his tribute lecture to Andrew Lang, "On Fairy Stories." As C.S. Lewis wrote of *The Lord of the Rings*, "these things were not devised to reflect any particular situation in the real world. It was the other way round; real events began, horribly, to confirm the pattern he had freely invented." I suspect that Tolkien's dislike of Lewis's Narnia series might be based, in part, on its author's indulgence in this genre.

RUSSELL DESMOND
New Orleans, La.

Joseph Pearce replies:

I am, of course, aware of Tolkien's "dislike" of allegory and have written at considerable length on the subject. In brief, Tolkien's understanding of "allegory" is far more subtle than most people realize, and this is the reason for so much misunderstanding on the subject. Take, for instance, his statement that "*The Lord of the Rings* is, of course, a fundamentally religious and Catholic work." These are Tolkien's words about his own work, not mine. But where is the mention of religion or Catholicism in *LotR*? There is none. The religion is to be detected through what Tolkien calls a dimension of "applicability" whereby what happens in the story can be *applied* to the world beyond the story, i.e., our world. This is, of course, an allegorical process. Tolkien had no objection to this sort of allegory. The sort of allegory he "disliked" was the kind of formal or crude allegory employed by Bunyan in *The Pilgrim's Progress* or by C.S. Lewis in *The Pilgrim's Regress*. In

fact, as regards my particular claim about the political applicability of the work, I am merely echoing Tolkien's own views on the matter. In one of his letters, he stated quite explicitly that *The Lord of the Rings* is "an allegory of Power (exerted for Domination)." Since Tolkien himself refers to his own work as an allegory, I fail to see any objection to others following his example.

HAVE YOU NO DECENCY?

With his stirring defense of Mel Gibson's "The Passion," (April 26) Pat Buchanan remains our best analyst of those who declare war upon the Christian West and its now nearly defunct institutions.

While I expected the venom spat forth from the *New Republic*, I was shocked by the anger and outrageously inaccurate recreations of events by neoconservative columnists. One reads left-wing publications with an eye to understanding and ultimately defeating their arguments; one does not expect Mona Charen and Charles Krauthammer to sally forth with vitriolic, hate-filled, anti-Christian rhetoric. That they did reveals them to be woefully out of touch with what it means to be conservative and filled with contempt for their Christian brethren as either closet anti-Semites or just plain stupid. The tenor of their assault, replete with deliberate inaccuracies and attributions of hidden racist behavior is unfaithful to even the most basic elements of human decency.

MATTHEW M. O'CONNELL
Topeka, Kan.

ALWAYS THERE

Thank you for your publication, especially for the scope of your writing. Conservatism, as I learned from reading Goldwater, is not just about *Homo economicus*; thus, the range of topics that you have covered is not only appropriate but pleasing. This is especially true in the case of Taki.

I first read Taki in 1979, as a 17-year-old, in my first copy of *National Review*. The article was, "American Women Make Lousy Lovers." (Sadly, I have concluded that the gentleman is correct). As a charter subscriber, I am never happier than when I see his name in the table of contents.

LLOYD A. CONWAY
Charlotte, Mich.

UNLIMITED GOVERNMENT

The May 10 issue refers to the American war in Iraq as "the no-win war." Is it any wonder? Traditional conservatives usually resent having government meddle into their private lives. But this is exactly what the American government is doing to the Iraqi people. We tell them they cannot have an Islamic government, even if they want it. We shut down Iraqi newspapers that say unfavorable things about the American government. And now, President Bush says that when we supposedly transfer power to the Iraqi people to govern themselves, they cannot make their own laws. What kind of "limited" government is this?

LAWRENCE K. MARSH
Gaithersburg, Md.

HOMELAND SECURITY

Michael Desch offers useful and interesting background on the impossibility of the world's preventing the Holocaust (April 12), but many of us who support Israel do not do so because of guilt over failure to prevent the Holocaust. Rather it is precisely because the world could do nothing, as Desch illustrates, that we believe the Jewish people must have a homeland where they can go when there is danger of persecution.

CAROL IANNONE
New York, N.Y.

The American Conservative welcomes letters to the editor. Submit by e-mail to letters@amconmag.com or by mail to 1300 Wilson Blvd., Suite 120, Arlington, VA 22209.

Fatal Friendship

“It is often dangerous to be an enemy of the United States,” Henry Kissinger used to say during the final years of Vietnam, “but to be a friend is fatal.”

The sordid tradition began at the Tehran summit in 1943. There FDR told Stalin he could keep that half of Poland that had been ceded to him in the Hitler-Stalin pact, even though Great Britain had gone to war to restore the territorial integrity of Poland.

FDR only asked that Stalin not mention the betrayal before the 1944 election, lest it cost him some Polish wards in Chicago.

After the Poles were sold out came the turn of the Nationalist Chinese. They were denied the money and war material to resist the Soviet-supplied Communist armies of Mao. Millions of Chinese who had cast their lot with the United States paid with their lives.

After our POWs came home from Hanoi in 1973, Congress all but cut off military aid to Saigon, denying the South Vietnamese even the right to die on their feet when the North invaded in 1975.

Under Jimmy Carter, Somoza in Nicaragua and the Shah did not meet America's exacting standards for human rights. Both were jettisoned, and, instead, we got the Sandinistas and the Ayatollah.

Now, it seems to be Saudi Arabia's turn.

From the time FDR met with King Ibn Saud aboard the *U.S.S. Quincy* in the Suez Canal, on the way home from Yalta, the Saudis have lined up with us. When Moscow armed Nasser in Egypt and Syria and Iraq during the Cold War, Saudi Arabia remained steadfastly pro-American.

In the Reagan era, the Saudis worked

closely with us to drive the Red Army out of Afghanistan. In 1991, the king hosted the Army of Desert Storm, helped pay for the liberation of Kuwait, pumped oil to keep the prices down in the run-up to war.

Now we learn from John Solomon of the AP that when NATO ally Turkey denied us basing rights, “Saudi Arabia secretly helped the United States far more than has been acknowledged, allowing operations from at least three air bases, permitting special forces to stage attacks from Saudi soil, and providing cheap fuel ...”

Gen. T. Michael Moseley, architect of the air campaign, calls the Saudis “wonderful partners.” “We operated the command center in Saudi Arabia. We operated airplanes out of Saudi Arabia, as well as sensors, and tankers,” said General Moseley, adding that he treasured “their counsel, their mentoring, their leadership and their support.”

Thousands of special forces were allowed to launch operations from the kingdom. “Between 250 and 300 Air Force planes staged from Saudi Arabia, including AWACS, C-130s, refueling tankers and F-16 fighter jets during the height of the war,” Solomon learned.

Only Britain did as much to ensure an American victory. Why, then, the vendetta against Saudi Arabia among those who supported the war? For much of the animosity is coming from pundits who pride themselves on hard-headed realism but sound like 1960s peaceniks denouncing the “corrupt and dictatorial Thieu-Ky regime.”

Here is *National Review* on the Saudis: “Potentially, the most dangerous foreign-policy issue confronting the Bush administration, and its greatest dereliction in the War on Terror, is its see-no-evil approach to terror's bankers, the Saudis.”

Michael Ledeen includes the Saudis on his target list of “terror masters,” though Riyadh, given recent attacks, seems at the top of bin Laden's enemies list. *Commentary* magazine wants the Saudis taken down as part of a “World War IV” on hostile Arab regimes.

Have any of these people asked themselves who would take power in Saudi Arabia should the monarchy fall? Do they care? Do they want instability, chaos, and revolution to throw up an Islamic republic in Saudi Arabia and similar regimes across the Persian Gulf so that America will have no choice but fight a thirty years war?

Saudi-bashing makes for good politics. Even John Kerry has gotten in on the act. But there is a vital interest here. Can anyone believe that if the Saudi monarchy collapses in revolution the regime that rises in its place will be as friendly to this country or that, in deciding whether to pump or not to pump oil, it will be as receptive as the kingdom is today to America's needs and requests?

As he observed George III kick away the crown jewels of the empire, the North American colonies, Edmund Burke made an astute observation, “A great empire and little minds go ill together.”

It applies to a goodly slice of the American elite today. If we are unprepared to deal with flawed friends, it is time to give up the pretense of being a world power, for most of mankind is flawed, not excluding our heroic selves. ■

[disney in decline]

How the Mouse Lost His Magic

Ousting Eisner won't be enough to right troubled Disney if it doesn't rediscover the wonder of childhood.

By Peter Eavis

IN THE MIDST of its recent troubles the Walt Disney Company did something that revealed the desperation of its senior management team, dominated for 20 years by chief executive Michael Eisner.

On the eve of the critical March 3 shareholder vote on Eisner's leadership, Disney placed full-page ads in several high-circulation newspapers to announce its participation in a new movie. Disney rarely, if ever, announces movie plans in quite such an ostentatious and expensive fashion. But the sudden burst of publicity was especially odd because the movie is not scheduled for release until Christmas 2005.

What was the film that Disney executives were so keen to give the country such early notice of? A live-action version of C.S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, to be produced in cooperation with Walden Media. And why the bizarre ad blitz? One can only assume that Disney wanted to give its critics the impression that it is still in the game of producing the sort of magical, blockbuster kids' movies that made the company a much-loved institution in the first place. Disney hasn't made an exceptional

children's movie in over ten years, and no film made under Eisner's reign has come close to the cinematic greatness of "Pinocchio" or "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," which Sergei Eisenstein called the best ever movie made.

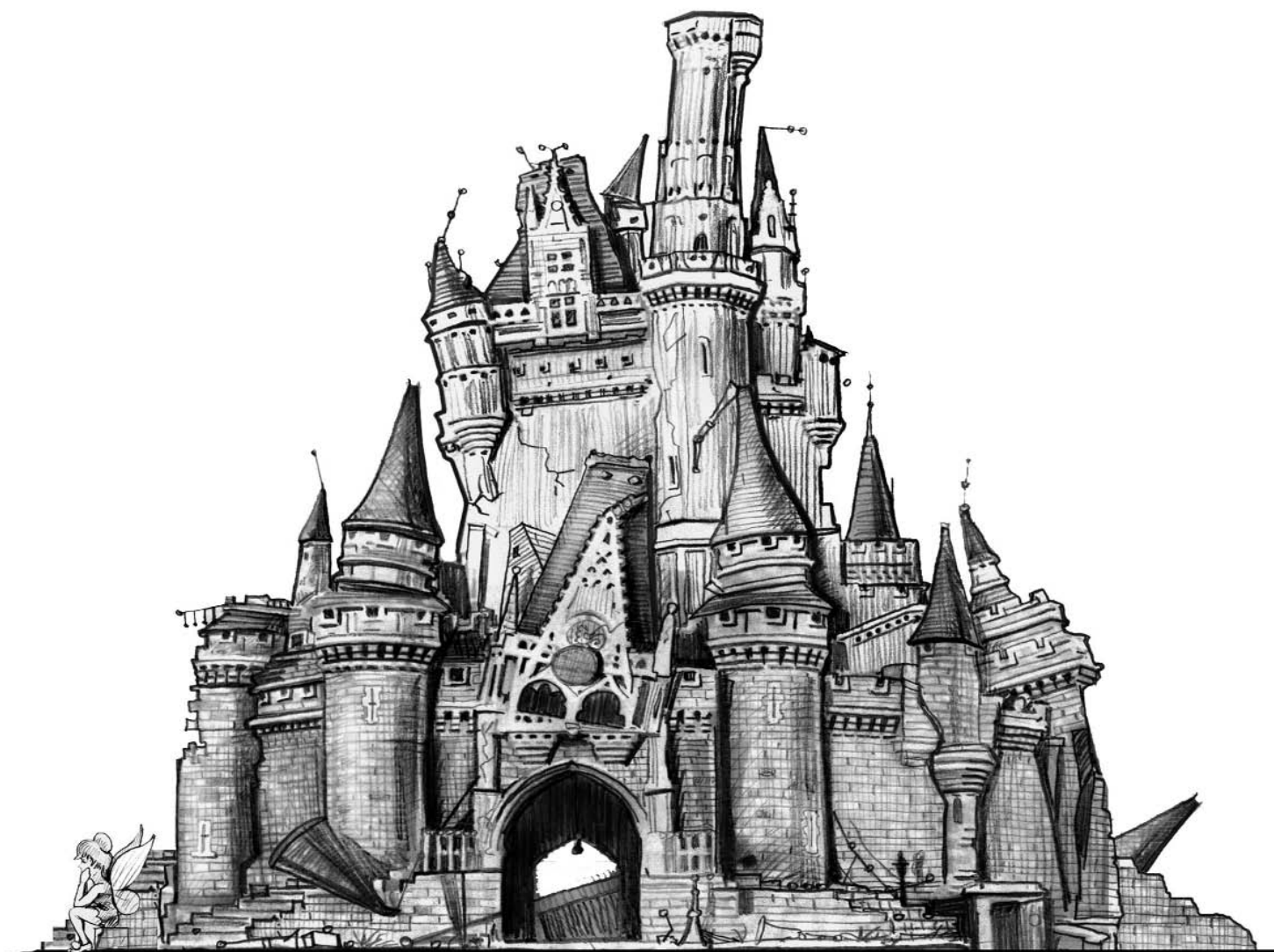
The dearth of great kids' movies coming out of Disney is the starkest indication that the House of Mouse has lost its magic. In his first years at the top, Eisner revived Disney's economic fortunes, but he has also overseen a dramatic aesthetic and moral decline. In 1928, an unknown Midwesterner called Walter Disney burst onto the scene with a cartoon called "Steamboat Willie." From then until his death in 1966, Walt's company became a dream factory capable of capturing American imaginations for generation after generation. Walt, fiercely independent from the start, never wanted his company to become just another Hollywood studio. He grasped that being part of Tinseltown required aesthetic and moral compromises he wasn't willing to make.

Under Eisner, the consummate Hollywood insider, Disney has made those compromises and become just another global entertainment conglomerate,

pumping out a frighteningly prodigious slew of low-grade movies, music, and television, often dedicated to a ferociously progressive agenda. Because of Eisner, Disney is now right up there with trash factories like Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. and Viacom, which produced and aired Janet Jackson's Super Bowl breastcapade.

Indeed, the Eisner years at Disney represent the Left's biggest victory in the culture war. Progressives always had the pre-Eisner Walt Disney in their sights. They looked down on Walt-era movies for their uncompromising wholesomeness, and Walt himself will always be a villain to the Left because of his collaboration with Hoover's FBI and his support for the House Un-American Activities Committee. Of course, progressives now despise Disney, the profits-hungry corporation, but they celebrate the company's embrace of their beliefs. The boldest example of this is Disney's tacit support for the annual Gay Days that take place at its Orlando and Anaheim theme parks.

Under Eisner, Disney has come to produce some of the darkest offerings in modern culture and, most despicably, it



CHRIS HIRS

uses kids' movies to forward its hypersexualized worldview. Disney defenders claim this is just conservative hysteria, but movies currently in theaters show this to be the case. Take "Kill Bill Vol. 2," a slick paean to vengeful murder produced by Disney's feted Miramax label. In one scene, the heroine claws out the eyeball of an already one-eyed rival female assassin and coolly squishes the organ with her bare foot.

"Home on the Range," Disney's most recent animated feature, contains enough innuendo to make Howard Stern blush. In one scene, a group of cows are teasing a male horse character for being smitten with his human master, a brooding bounty hunter. One of the heifers,

played by Roseanne Barr, taunts the horse: "Do you get to ride him on odd days or even?" This from the studio that brought us "Bambi."

It is somewhat gratifying, then, to witness the assault on Disney's leadership. There is a real chance that Eisner, who has received compensation totaling around \$1 billion since joining the company, could be gone within the next couple of years. Walt's nephew, Roy Disney, and investor Stanley Gold are leading a very well organized shareholders' revolt to unseat the chief exec. Earlier this year, Eisner had to fend off an unsolicited \$50 billion takeover bid by cable giant Comcast. Though Comcast withdrew its bid in late April

because it didn't want to increase its offer price, Disney remains exposed to corporate predators.

Comcast was emboldened to pounce because of the unpopularity of Eisner, who is seen on Wall Street as an increasingly out-of-touch corporate Castro. Disney is also vulnerable to predators because of the continuing poor ratings performance of the Disney-owned ABC television network and the widespread feeling that the company just cannot cut it in what was once its core business: making sensational kids' movies.

In mustering his defense, Eisner has not been able to point to good financial results for several years now. In 2003, Disney's per-share earnings were no

higher than they were seven years ago. Its stock is 40 percent below its all-time high, reached four years ago. Disney shareholders have much in Eisner's long tenure to get upset about. For example, in 1996 Disney paid super-agent Michael Ovitz a severance package estimated at \$140 million—just a year after Eisner had wooed him to the company. The payout is now the subject of shareholder litigation against Disney.

In this environment, it has been easy for Roy Disney and Gold to whip up support for their cause. Their biggest victory so far came at Disney's annual meeting in early March, when 43 percent of shareholders withheld their votes to re-elect Eisner to the board.

Disney's directors' sole concession to the critics was to unseat Eisner as chairman, leaving him in the CEO post where he will likely undermine any reforms attempted by Disney's new chairman, former Sen. George Mitchell. Outside the company walls, Roy Disney and Gold are showing few signs of letting up in their campaign. Their feud has enough personal bitterness to sustain it for years. Disney hissed in his Nov. 30 resignation letter to Eisner: "Michael, it is my sincere belief that it is you who should be leaving and not me." And Roy's latest coup was to obtain data

CEO Brian Roberts, known for his patience and long-term perspective, will re-launch his bid if Disney slips badly. And with Eisner in the top post, it may not be long before Disney reports disappointing numbers and becomes quickly defenseless against another takeover attempt. Disney supporters currently think a reviving economy will bail Disney out with higher theme-park revenues, but unexpectedly expensive movie flops like "The Alamo" could undermine Disney's efforts to achieve its aggressive earnings forecasts for this year. Another year at the bottom of the network rankings for ABC could be enough to force Disney into a predator's arms.

So is a Disney revival just a matter of toppling Eisner? Sadly, no. Though possessing Disney blood, nephew Roy is not going to bring about the much-needed artistic renaissance. He certainly talks the talk, writing in a February letter to Disney's shareholders: "Comcast's offer to purchase Disney is confirmation that we are not alone in our belief that Disney can be reinvigorated by embracing its rich creative heritage. Creativity must be the core of the company."

But while Roy now loathes Eisner, he may still have too much admiration for the vulgarization process that the CEO unleashed. In the May issue of *Vanity*

that is at stark variance with the ethos and spirit of the old Walt Disney that America fell in love with 70 years ago—and never really stopped loving. To reclaim that old magic, there has to be a complete jettisoning of this contemporary approach to children's movies. And that is unlikely to happen under Roy Disney or a company like Comcast.

Disney will only be a lasting force in the entertainment industry, however, if it returns to its roots and stops trying to mimic the dross put out by other media conglomerates. Not just shareholders would benefit from such a shift. We would all benefit from having a large studio in existence that believes cinematic greatness can be achieved in a children's movie.

Walt Disney himself believed this combination was possible, and it shows in the classics that were made under him. But to make timeless kids' movies, a studio has to do one important thing: believe in childhood. And in the past 20 years, every major studio, including Disney, has stopped doing just that.

Instead, Hollywood seems to think childhood is only made complete if it includes much from the adult world. As a result, kids' movies contain increasing amounts of worldliness, campiness, and sexuality. Disney has joined the rest of the entertainment industry, and possibly a good part of society, in believing that children are merely under-formed adults for whom a movie like "Dumbo" is, well, just too dumb.

However, childhood is supposed to happen, even if the media elites do not want it to. It is a Dickensian cliché that children were robbed of childhood by having to go to work at too early an age. Today, a real shrinkage of childhood is taking place because of other factors. One is the general moral decline of society. Think of Britney Spears, adored by pre-teens, French-kissing Madonna. Another is the materialism that leads

HOLLYWOOD SEEMS TO THINK CHILDHOOD IS ONLY MADE COMPLETE IF IT INCLUDES MUCH FROM THE ADULT WORLD.

showing deep anti-Eisner sentiment among current and former Disney employees. A stunning 72 percent of shares cast by the company's retirement plan were withheld in the vote to reappoint Eisner as CEO.

Meanwhile, expect Comcast and other rivals to keep stalking Disney in the shadows. It's quite possible that Comcast's

Fair, Michael Wolff writes that Roy admitted with "some grudging admiration and embarrassment" that Eisner made it possible "to show bare breasts at Disney."

Indeed, Roy was head of animation at Disney from 1985 till his resignation last year, a period when the company embraced a trend in children's movies



REUTERS PHOTO ARCHIVE

both parents to work, even if they have young children. And then there are the entertainment companies like Disney that celebrate, and hope to profit from, the “adultification” of kids.

The films that attempt to embrace this early-maturation trend are typically weak. Disney and rivals like Dream-Works and Pixar are all striving to make their features “edgier.” What audiences get, though, are mutant movies that fall between two stools because they are not funny to adults and they fail to spark wonderment in children.

Age compression, to use the industry jargon, can simply be irritating. But sometimes edginess can undermine an entire movie. In Disney’s “Lilo & Stitch” animated feature, the idea of what childhood constitutes is so confused that it is actually impossible to estimate an age for Lilo, the young Hawaiian girl who is the main (human) character in the movie. She looks like she’s four and sometimes acts like it, but her behavior more resembles that of an emotionally traumatized 14-year-old. “Leave me alone to die,” Lilo tells her adult older

sister, and effectively her sole parent, in one scene.

Yes, Pinocchio had his moments of despair, but as he learned the ways of the world he remained a child. Indeed, he became one. By contrast, Lilo is never really a child, but an adolescent with toddlerish tendencies. The old Disney clearly believed that childhood is a place where there should be room to discover oneself and start to grapple with the big themes of life, like good and evil. The new Disney dodges, down-plays, or flubs such ideas.

One recent Disney production that attempted to play it straight was “Treasure Planet,” an expensive animated feature that flopped last year. The movie is surprisingly free from the usual annoying attempts at edginess and the storyline is centered on redemption. So why did “Treasure Planet” fail commercially? A lack of edginess? No, the movie was aesthetically dead. The characters were clichés and the animation mediocre. It felt like Disney’s heart just was not in a project that did not contain all the fashionable adult influences.

“Treasure Planet” did badly in the same year that “Finding Nemo,” laced with smart-alecky adult humor, was far more successful at the box office. “Nemo,” made by Pixar but distributed by Disney, took in \$844 million around the world, making it the ninth-highest grossing movie of all time and the second-biggest kids’ movie. Industry experts therefore hail Pixar, which has now spilt with Disney, as the future of children’s entertainment.

The Pixar bubble could soon pop, however. It is too big a believer in age compression ever to make great movies. Also, one can already see signs of self-parody in its work. Moreover, a classic Disney movie could blow anything from Pixar out of the water. Box-office comparisons between movies released decades apart are notoriously difficult. Even so, the massive gap between the grosses for Disney’s classics and recent releases is big enough to provide ample margin for judgment. For example, on an inflation-adjusted basis using U.S.-only box-office receipts, “Snow White” raked in \$675 million, the tenth largest

inflation-adjusted gross. By contrast, “Nemo” grossed \$340 million in the U.S., placing it a lowly 59th overall.

To be fair, Eisner made real efforts in the early '90s to make great animated features. But even these contained some of the flaws that would later cripple the company's creativity. In “The Lion King,” which is the best thing produced under Eisner, meaty themes like death, guilt, and fear are successfully explored. And it had a raw power not seen in Disney movies before. The signs of the future rot are clearly apparent, though. The makers felt compelled to have the lions believe in a half-baked Earth religion called the Circle of Life. And adult humor was creeping in. In one scene, the innocent cub Simba asks the evil,

were two stark examples of this trough. First, a brutally graphic Miramax movie called “Kids,” which was about a young skateboarder who sets out to deflower as many virgins as possible. In fact, almost the entire output of Miramax represents an interesting study in post-Christian morality. Early on in “Kill Bill Vol. 1,” the quintessential Miramax movie because of its low-brow irony and adolescent desire to shock, the heroine breathlessly announces: “It’s mercy, compassion, and forgiveness I lack, not rationality.” What better motto for modern America?

The other epoch-making stinker from Disney in the mid-'90s was “Pocahontas,” without doubt the worst big-budget animated feature ever made. Maybe

The plot is full of holes. Pocahontas learns to speak English fluently in 20 seconds after meeting the Englishman with whom she eventually falls in love. In real life, Pocahontas converted to Christianity. Somewhat understandably, Disney chooses to not include that, but it does not feel embarrassed about having Pocahontas's British beau chat with her friendly tree-spirit. Eisner said in his autobiography that he had doubts about Pocahontas when it was being made. But he let it come out in the form it did.

It is almost impossible to imagine that the Disney that made “Pocahontas” and “Lilo & Stitch” could create something great out of Narnia. But the success of “The Passion” may even convince Disney and partner Walden Media to bring out the rich Christian undertones of Lewis's work. After all, Walden is controlled by Christian billionaire Philip Anschutz.

And there is one very strong contemporary indication that children still want magical children's fare like Narnia: the off-the-charts success of the Harry Potter books, which are mercifully devoid of edginess and create a world apart from everyday adults. In fact, the 2001 movie “Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone” is the biggest-grossing children's film of all time, taking in \$976 million globally.

That of course bodes well for “The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe,” in which adults hardly feature. But Disney could still screw it up. Indeed, failure to make something great out of something as ripe as Narnia would be the clearest sign yet of Disney's creative bankruptcy. To guard against such an eventuality, the board needs to pressure Eisner out now. His departure would be one of the happiest endings in the history of the Magic Kingdom. ■

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THE TRIBE LIVES IN AN **AGRARIAN UTOPIA**. POCAHONTAS IS DRAWN TO LOOK EXACTLY LIKE A **BAYWATCH BABE**.

decadent usurper lion, Scar, “Why are you so weird?” Scar, in his ever-so-camp drawl, supplied by Jeremy Irons, replies suggestively, “You have no idea.”

It was in 1994, the year “The Lion King” was released, that things started to go wrong for Disney on so many fronts. The company's president, Frank Wells, died in a helicopter crash. Wells had joined Disney alongside Eisner and kept him in check. One Disney veteran even described Wells as Eisner's Jiminy Cricket—his conscience. In his autobiography, Eisner says Wells was “a source of quiet moral authority to whom I could turn whenever I was tempted to push the boundaries just a little too far.”

And Eisner soon started behaving as if there were no boundaries whatsoever. In 1995, Disney overpaid for the ABC network. Eisner's lack of boundaries pushed Disney to an artistic nadir. There

because it was conceived against the backdrop of the first O.J. trial and the racial tension that event engendered, Pocahontas became a bizarre piece of politically-correct agitprop.

As soon as the Englishmen traveling to the New World are introduced, we learn that they are intent on slaughtering the Indians. “Not a thousand bloodthirsty savages shall stand in our way,” Disney has one Englishman say. The portrayal of the Indians is also stereotypical. Though the tribe we encounter has just finished a war with another tribe, it lives in an agrarian Utopia. Pocahontas is drawn to look exactly like a Baywatch Babe. It is therefore very odd to see her prancing about over the countryside belting out the PC anthem that includes the line that captured the wretched zeitgeist of the mid-'90s: “Can you paint with all the colors of the wind?”

[lost tribe]

Forgotten Christians

Not all displaced Palestinians are Muslims.

By Anders Strindberg

MEL GIBSON'S "The Passion of the Christ" is playing to full houses in the Syrian capital Damascus. Watching it here turns out to be much the same as watching it on opening night in New York—customarily rowdy moviegoers observe a reverent silence, the usual sound of candy wrappers is replaced by sobbing and gasping, and, at the end of it all, the audience files out of the theater in silence and contemplation.

Many of those watching the movie on this occasion are Palestinian Christian refugees whose parents or grandparents were purged from their homeland—the land of Christ—at the foundation of Israel in 1948. For them the movie has an underlying symbolic meaning not easily perceived in the West: not only is it a depiction of the trial, scourging, and death of Jesus, it is also a symbolic depiction of the fate of the Palestinian people. "This is how we feel," says Zaki, a 27-year old Palestinian Christian whose family hails from Haifa. "We take beating after beating at the hands of the world, they crucify our people, they insult us, but we refuse to surrender."

At the time of the creation of the Israeli state in 1948, it is estimated that the Christians of Palestine numbered some 350,000. Almost 20 percent of the total population at the time, they constituted a vibrant and ancient community; their forbears had listened to St. Peter in Jerusalem as he preached at the first

Pentecost. Yet Zionist doctrine held that Palestine was "a land without a people for a people without a land." Of the 750,000 Palestinians that were forced from their homes in 1948, some 50,000 were Christians—7 percent of the total number of refugees and 35 percent of the total number of Christians living in Palestine at the time.

In the process of "Judaizing" Palestine, numerous convents, hospices, seminaries, and churches were either destroyed or cleared of their Christian owners and custodians. In one of the most spectacular attacks on a Christian target, on May 17, 1948, the Armenian Orthodox Patriarchate was shelled with about 100 mortar rounds—launched by Zionist forces from the already occupied monastery of the Benedictine Fathers on Mount Zion. The bombardment also damaged St. Jacob's Convent, the Archangel's Convent, and their appended churches, their two elementary and seminary schools, as well as their libraries, killing eight people and wounding 120.

Today it is believed that the number of Christians in Israel and occupied Palestine number some 175,000, just over 2 percent of the entire population, but the numbers are rapidly dwindling due to mass emigration. Of those who have remained in the region, most live in Lebanon, where they share in the same bottomless misery as all other refugees, confined to camps where schools are

under-funded and overcrowded, where housing is ramshackle, and sanitary conditions are appalling. Most, however, have fled the region altogether. No reliable figures are available, but it is estimated that between 100,000 and 300,000 Palestinian Christians currently live in the U.S.

The Palestinian Christians see themselves, and are seen by their Muslim compatriots, as an integral part of the Palestinian people, and they have long been a vital part of the Palestinian struggle. As the Anglican bishop of Jerusalem, the Reverend Riah Abu al-Assal has explained, "The Arab Palestinian Christians are part and parcel of the Arab Palestinian nation. We have the same history, the same culture, the same habits and the same hopes."

Yet U.S. media and politicians have become accustomed to thinking of and talking about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as one in which an enlightened democracy is constantly forced to repel attacks from crazy-eyed Islamists bent on the destruction of the Jewish people and the imposition of an Islamic state. Palestinians are equated with Islamists, Islamists with terrorists. It is presumably because all organized Christian activity among Palestinians is non-political and non-violent that the community hardly ever hits the Western headlines; suicide bombers sell more copy than people who congregate for Bible study.

Lebanese and Syrian Christians were essential in the conception of Arab nationalism as a general school of anti-colonial thought following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the 20th century. During the 1930s, Hajj Amin al-Husseini, the leader of the Palestinian struggle against the British colonialists, surrounded himself with Christian advisors and functionaries. In the 1950s and '60s, as the various factions that were to form the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) emerged, some of the most prominent militants were yet again of Christian origin. For instance, George Habash, a Greek Orthodox medical doctor from al-Lod, created the Arab Nationalists' Movement and went on to found the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Naif Hawatmeh, also Greek Orthodox, from al-Salt in Jordan, founded and still today heads up the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Among those better

and Lutherans. There is also a small but influential Quaker presence. These communities are centered in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Beit Jala, Beit Sahour, and Ramallah.

For them, the conflict with Israel is quite obviously not about Islamism contra enlightenment but simply about resistance against occupation. To be sure, there have been periods of tension between the Christian communities and members of the Islamist groups, yet to many Christian Palestinians the Islamist movements have emerged by default as the heroes in the conflict with Israel. Following the incremental atrophy of leftist ideals, the Islamists are seen as the only ones who are willing and able to fight the occupation. The Lebanese Hezbollah, widely seen as a nonsectarian organization that is able to cooperate with people of all faiths, is particularly admired both among the refugees in Lebanon as well as those who remain

and programs that seek to ease the suffering of the Palestinians and draw attention to the injustices with which they are faced. Usually working within strictly religious frames of reference, however, their impact on the political situation has been minimal.

This political limitation has not applied to those parts of the Evangelical movement that have adopted Zionism as a core element of their religious doctrine. Christian Zionists in the U.S. are currently organized in an alliance with the pro-Israel lobby and the neoconservative elements of the Republican Party, enabling them to put significant pressure on both the president and members of Congress. In fact, they are among the most influential shapers of policy in the country, including individuals such as Ralph Reed, Pat Robertson, and Jerry Falwell, and groups such as the National Unity Coalition for Israel, Christians for Israel, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, and Chosen People Ministries.

Christian Zionism is an odd thing on many levels. A key tenet of Christian Zionism is absolute support for Israel, whose establishment and existence, it is believed, heralds Armageddon and the second coming of Christ. The politically relevant upshot of this is that without Israel's expansion there can be no redemption, and those who subscribe to this interpretation are only too eager to sacrifice their Palestinian fellow Christians on the altar of Zionism. They do not want to hear about coreligionists' suffering at the hands of Israel.

Israeli and Jewish American leaders have until recently kept their distance from the Christian Zionist movement. But Beltway alliance politics coupled with a sharp turn to the right among American Jewish organizations since Israel began its onslaught on Palestinians in September 2000, has driven them into each other's arms.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH HAS, IN FACT, LONG ARGUED FOR AN END TO THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION AND FOR IMPROVEMENT OF THE PALESTINIANS' SITUATION.

regarded in the West, Hannan Ashrawi, one of the Palestinian Authority's most effective spokespersons, is a Christian.

In fact, over the decades, many of the rank and file among the secular nationalist groups of the PLO have been Christians who have seen leftist nationalist politics as the only alternative to both Islamism and Western liberalism, the former objectionable because of its religiously exclusive nature, the latter due to what is seen by many as its inherent protection of Israel and the Zionist project.

Among the remnant communities in Palestine, most belong to the traditional Christian confessions. The largest group is Greek Orthodox, followed by Catholics (Roman, Syrian, Maronite, and Melkite), Armenian Orthodox, Anglicans,

in Palestine. "We have received far more support and comfort from the Hezbollah in Lebanon than from our fellow Christians in the West," remarked one Christian Palestinian refugee in Damascus. "I want to know, why don't the Christians in the West do anything to help us? Are the teachings of Jesus nothing but empty slogans to them?"

This is a justified and important question, but the answer is not straightforward. The Catholic Church has, in fact, long argued for an end to the Israeli occupation and for improvement of the Palestinians' situation. The leaders of the Eastern Orthodox churches have taken similar, often more strongly worded positions. Likewise, many Lutheran and Calvinist churches run organizations

One of the most potent forces behind the Evangelical Zionist influence in Washington is Tom DeLay, leader of the Republican majority in the House. DeLay insists that his devotion to Israel stems from his faith in God, which allows him a clear understanding of the struggle between good and evil. Be that as it may, he is also able to cash in financially and politically from his position. Part of DeLay's growing influence within the Republican Party stems from the fact that his campaign committees managed to raise an impressive \$12 million in 2001-2002. *Washington Post* writer Jim VandeHei suggested, "In recent years, DeLay has become one of the most outspoken defenders of Israel and has been rewarded with a surge of donations from the Jewish community."

In Oct. 2002, Benny Elon, Sharon's minister of tourism and a staunch advocate of a comprehensive purge of Palestinians from the Holy Land, appeared with DeLay at the Washington convention of the Christian Coalition. Crowds waved Israeli flags as Elon cited Biblical authority for this preferred way of dealing with the pesky Palestinians. DeLay, in turn, received an enthusiastic welcome when he called for activists to back pro-Israel candidates who "stand unashamedly for Jesus Christ." In July 2003, Tom DeLay traveled to Israel and addressed the Knesset, telling the assembled legislators that he was an "Israeli at heart." The Palestinians "have been oppressed and abused," he said, but never by Israel, only by their own leaders. DeLay received a standing ovation.

Christians find themselves under the hammer of the Israeli occupation to no less an extent than Muslims, yet America—supposedly a Christian country—stands idly by because its most politically influential Christians have decided that Palestinian Christians are acceptable collateral damage in their apocalyptic quest. "To be a Christian from the

land of Christ is an honor," says Abbas, a Palestinian Christian whose family lived in Jerusalem for many generations until the purge of 1948. "To be expelled from that land is an injury, and these Zionist Christians in America add insult."

Abbas is one of the handful of Palestinian Christians that could be described as Evangelical, belonging to a group that appears to be distantly related to the Plymouth Brethren. Cherishing the role of devil's advocate, I had to ask

him, "Is the State of Israel not in fact the fulfillment of God's promise and a necessary step in the second coming of Christ?" Abbas looked at me briefly and laughed. "You're kidding, right? You know what they do to our people and our land. If I thought that was part of God's plan, I'd be an atheist in a second." ■

Anders Strindberg is an academic and a journalist specializing in Mideast politics.

The Pink Embassy

The foreign service goes limp.

By W. James Antle III

AS U.S. AMBASSADOR Michael Guest prepares to end his mission to Romania later this year, retrospectives on his service are likely to accentuate the positive. Under his watch, the government in Bucharest remained firmly in the "New Europe" camp: Romania contributed troops to the Iraq War, joined NATO, and was usually strongly aligned with America.

But other observers of his tenure paint a less glowing picture, believing that a changing of the guard at the U.S. embassy is long overdue. Guest's critics charge that his ambassadorship has sent a different message abroad than most Americans would care to transmit, exporting not democracy or free markets but the sexual revolution.

When Bill Clinton selected the homosexual hot dog heir James Hormel to become ambassador to Luxembourg, it was a highly controversial move. Senate Republican leaders placed a hold on the nomination and forced Clinton to grant Hormel the assignment through a recess

appointment. However, criticism of George W. Bush for appointing Guest, an openly gay man, to the post of ambassador to Romania was muted. While party loyalty was a major factor in this contrast, it was also the case that some senators objected to Hormel not due to his sexual orientation as such but rather because he was considered likely to use his ambassadorship as a government-sanctioned platform for gay-rights advocacy. There were no similar concerns about Guest, who was a 20-year career diplomat, lifelong Republican, and former Reagan administration press aide.

Yet some Americans serving their country in Romania contend that a transformation in the embassy's culture took place nevertheless. As the gay marriage debate raged at home, taxpayers began to foot the bill for a *de facto* civil union in Bucharest.

When Guest was sworn in, Secretary of State Colin Powell recognized his male partner, Alex Nevarez, during the ceremony. Nevarez traveled to Romania

with the new ambassador and moved in to live with him at the official diplomatic residence. He accompanied Guest as he presented his credentials to Romanian President Ion Iliescu.

Nevarez was an active participant in both formal and informal embassy events, where he would be introduced to attendees as Guest's partner. Insiders recalled him attending a Marine Corps ball with the ambassador (something that would have been impermissible for the Marines themselves) and being mentioned in invitations, including a draft of one to be sent for a Fourth of July party at the ambassador's residence.

All of this would have raised eyebrows as recently as the Clinton administration. One of the main arguments against Hormel was that his lifestyle would offend the Roman Catholic majority in his receiving country. The Orthodox Christians who predominate in Romania have also traditionally disapproved of homosexuality, yet our government sent them an ambassador whose partner is treated as the equivalent of a spouse.

This cultural innovation was not without impact on embassy staff. Cdr. William Dempsey was a career naval officer serving in Bucharest as chief of the Office of Defense Cooperation, managing \$40 million in U.S. assistance to the Romanian armed forces. A devout Evangelical Christian and father of five, he had been accustomed to his post being a family-friendly environment. After Guest began his mission, the persistent recognition and endorsement of same-sex partners prevented him from participating in certain events to avoid having to explain homosexuality to his young children.

Dempsey met with Guest to discuss his concerns and identify himself as a source for a January 2002 Family Research Council newsletter article critical of gay activism at the embassy. Guest had reportedly told his staff mem-

bers that he knew his homosexuality would invite some controversy and was willing to talk to people who were concerned.

Dempsey recalls that the two men had a civil conversation about these issues and the ambassador asserted that he was not interested in promoting any type of "homosexual agenda." Dempsey told Guest that it was less a matter of his

ADVERTISEMENTS FOR THE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY INVITED NOT JUST SPOUSES BUT PARTNERS.

intentions than the tone his behavior set, arguing "as the ambassador, you are the agenda."

Others put it more strongly. "Suddenly it was like there was a club running things," said one Foreign Service veteran who had been stationed there. "If you weren't part of the gay clique, you did not belong."

According to these observers, Guest's presence made Bucharest a more attractive assignment for other gays in the Foreign Service. They report that other people's partners were recognized at embassy events alongside men's wives and women's husbands. Advertisements for the annual Christmas party invited not just spouses but partners. Guest set a precedent that would be followed by others, with the cumulative result of lending government support to positions taken by gay-rights advocates.

To be sure, the U.S. embassy in Bucharest under Guest is not the only place where officials grapple with the issues surrounding diplomats and their same-sex partners. A national organization, Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies, lists "increasing opportunities for same-sex partners accompanying personnel on assignment overseas" and securing taxpayer-funded health insur-

ance and benefits for the "partners and children of lesbian and gay employees" in its mission statement. Colin Powell has met personally with GLIFAA representatives. Although the electorate continues to debate the merits of government-sanctioned domestic partnerships, they are increasingly supporting them with their tax dollars among government employees.

But the environment in Bucharest does demonstrate the extent to which official recognition of such partnerships has institutional support within the government despite disagreement among the general public. Some Americans posted there felt that it was not feasible to challenge these new practices involving diplomats' same-sex partners and would therefore not register their complaints.

For his part, a few months after Dempsey made his objections known, he was informed that he would be moved out of Bucharest early. Despite receiving the highest possible marks on his last performance evaluation, conducted before Guest arrived in Romania, he was told verbally that he had become "disruptive to the collegial atmosphere" at the embassy. Officially, however, his reassignment was not attributed to his criticisms of Guest, and Dempsey emphasizes that there was never any formal reprimand or penalty against him.

Others who have worked in Bucharest claim that the cultural shift at the embassy was not limited to the formal approval of same-sex relationships and make graver charges. These witnesses claim that promiscuity among some Americans stationed in Romania increased to levels that threatened to

jeopardize the mission's reputation and subject U.S. government employees to blackmail. They stated that some diplomats were engaging in homosexual relations with Romanian citizens and other foreign nationals.

Such dalliances led some to ridicule the U.S. diplomatic presence in Romania as the "pink embassy" and the "Bucharest bathhouse." A letter sent by a group of Romanian NGOs and individuals to President Bush and Secretary Powell in January named high-level appointees responsible for having "transformed the U.S. diplomatic addresses in to havens of debauchery," and further alleges that "(b)ased on reports and pornographic photos circulating around newspapers..." they "... use their privileged positions to corrupt young Romanians, paying them for sexual relations, by both cash and visas to the U.S." The signatories of this letter include the Union of War Veterans, the National League of December 1989 Combatants, and three former Romanian parliament members.

An erstwhile gay lover of a former high-ranking official at the USAID mission in Bucharest has described such conduct in a sworn statement. He says that he lived with this official for four years in his government housing under the guise of serving as household help. There he claims to have witnessed U.S. government employees engaged in lewd acts and entering into other compromising positions.

According to his deposition, these acts included multiple sexual encounters with young Romanian men, some of whom may have been minors. The high-ranking USAID official's taxpayer-provided residence was said to be the site of wild sexually charged parties where participants allegedly used drugs and viewed pornography. He states that this official has made sexually explicit photographs of himself available on the Internet. He accuses other officials of

paying for sexual favors as well as offering foreign nationals visas in exchange for money or sex. Asked for comment, the USAID press office said it was unaware of any such allegations. Calls to the Inspector General's office were not returned.

This goes beyond moral and cultural tensions over homosexuality. If true, these serious betrayals of diplomatic responsibility are incompatible with the professional climate required to represent this country abroad effectively. Contrary to a firm U.S. policy against illicit sexual liaisons and the corruption of minors, they would constitute illegal acts using taxpayers' property and money with the potential to harm national security.

In addition, our national reputation has suffered enough recent damage in Romania due to the case of Kurt Treptow, a prominent historian the U.S. embassy in Bucharest placed on the Ful-

publishing house and then helped select him for the commission. While embassy officials dismiss claims that this was a conflict of interest, saying that personal knowledge should only enhance awareness of a candidate's qualifications, this familiarity apparently did not help disclose Treptow's criminal behavior.

Defenders of the U.S. mission have responded by claiming that the *BBW* is journalistically irresponsible and sensationalistic, attempting to create a scandal where none exists. The embassy's current public affairs officer, Mark Wentworth, has described the publication as "inexplicably inclined toward" conspiracy theories. But the incident remains a potential drag on Romanian public perceptions of the embassy.

This obviously does not necessarily mean that appointing an ambassador of a certain sexual orientation leads directly to a total collapse in standards of behavior, as even some critics of the

THEY ... USE THEIR PRIVILEGED POSITIONS TO **CORRUPT YOUNG ROMANIANS**, PAYING THEM FOR **SEXUAL RELATIONS** ...

bright Commission. Yet Treptow was a convicted sex offender. He videotaped himself engaging in sexual acts with children as young as seven, some of whom were allegedly orphans, and was sentenced to seven years in Romanian prison for pedophilia and child abuse.

Bucharest Business Week, an American-owned English-language newspaper that has been persistently critical of Guest, has published stories arguing that the incident was not a mere oversight but a symptom of a larger problem with the climate of the embassy. In its tenacious coverage of the scandal, *BBW* has reported that Guest's former public affairs officer, Kiki Munshi Skagen, had her writings published by Treptow's

current state of affairs at the embassy in Bucharest concede. Dempsey, for example, told *TAC* he had no direct knowledge of any of the more lurid allegations and does not believe that Guest would condone such activities.

Whoever is posted as U.S. ambassador to Romania will be responsible for maintaining acceptable standards of conduct. Whether redefining marriage and the family to include nontraditional arrangements would have any impact on their ability to do so is something Americans are presently discussing. There is a reason this debate is occurring and why bureaucrats with control of taxpayer dollars and an international platform should not seek to circumvent it. ■

[hajib Americans won't do]

You've Come A Long Way, Baby

A package deal: third-world immigrants and medieval misogyny

By Brenda Walker

WASN'T DIVERSITY in immigration supposed to enrich America, to brighten up our boring Calvinist lives with vibrant swaths of ethnic color? How then do we square the sentimental view of the invigorating immigrant infusion when we read about the Atlanta indictment in March of an Ethiopian man, Khalid Adem, for circumcising his daughter with a pair of scissors? Perhaps the multicultural idea needs a closer examination.

In fact, evidence is accumulating that offensive foreign traditions, including horrifically cruel child abuse, are being imported to America under the friendly rubric of diversity. Multiculturalists have lectured at length that all societies are equal and should be celebrated. Cultural equivalence is a reassuring mythology in these politically correct times; however, the truth is that numerous Third World cultures condone the most terrible brutality, particularly violence against women and girls.

The Atlanta case shines a light on a dirty little secret about African immigrants—that female genital mutilation (FGM) is common in many of their societies. The World Health Organization estimates that the prevalence of FGM in Ethiopia is 85 percent. FGM is a procedure that ranges from clitoris excision to the entire vagina being removed under unsanitary conditions with no anes-

thetic. Some girls go into shock and even die from blood loss, and adult women who have been genitally mutilated may suffer bladder and kidney infections, painful intercourse, and difficult childbirth. In 1996, Congress found it necessary to outlaw FGM in America—another effect of importing “diversity.”

The Atlanta arrest may be an anomaly because there is evidence that, rather than being stamped out, FGM has merely gone underground. (The Centers for Disease Control estimate more than 160,000 females in immigrant communities in the United States may have undergone the procedure.) For example, a Somali math teacher in Houston vowed to send his

FGM is only one of many objectionable cultural practices and attitudes brought to America in the continuing influx of multicultural immigration. Other illegalities include so-called “honor killing,” like the 1999 Ohio murders of a 39-year-old female doctor, her father, her sister, and her 2-year-old niece by the doctor's disgruntled Pakistani husband. Another unacceptable import is forced marriage, particularly of underage girls: in Nebraska, a Shi'ite refugee of the 1991 Gulf War decided to fight the assimilation of his 13- and 14-year-old daughters by forcing them to marry adult Muslim men. The family was unhappy to learn that this matter, considered normal in

CULTURAL EQUIVALENCE IS A REASSURING MYTHOLOGY; HOWEVER, THE TRUTH IS THAT NUMEROUS THIRD WORLD CULTURES CONDONE THE MOST TERRIBLE BRUTALITY, PARTICULARLY VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN.

daughter to Somalia to be cut because, “This was a way of ensuring a girl's good behavior. It prevents them from running wild.” In October 2002, when the U.S. government considered banning Somali refugee families because of FGM, Somalis slated to enter America rushed to mutilate even toddlers after they learned that the practice was illegal here.

Iraq, is grounds for criminal prosecution in the United States.

What would women's rights pioneers like Susan B. Anthony have thought at the sight of all-enveloping Islamic veils in Arab immigrant communities on American streets? There's no doubt the suffragists would be shocked that millions are admitted

from the most extreme woman-hating societies: reformers didn't devote their lives to women's equality so that far worse oppression could be imported a century later. Anthony and her peers would recognize that Islamic veils in this nation send a message that oppressing women is an acceptable cultural expression, rather than an affront to American women and freedoms gained only after a century of struggle.

Furthermore, the erosion of women's social standing is not an imaginary worry but a definite possibility illustrated in European nations where Islamic immigration has been common. In Denmark, for example, Muslims now comprise only 4 percent of the population but are the majority of convicted rapists, and their victims are Danish women.

In nearby Norway, a professor declared that locals should get used to increased instances of rape: "Norwegian women must realize that we live in a multicultural society and adapt themselves to it." The professor evidently believes that violence against women is an acceptable price to pay for the new diverse society, and requiring Muslims to obey the laws of their adopted nation is too much to ask. Swimming pools have been a flashpoint in Holland, where European women have been threatened by Muslim young men for appearing in Dutch pools without being covered in the Islamic style.

In America, the largest influx is from the south, and much of Latin culture is still imbued with deep-rooted machismo that can boil over into brutality against women. The *Washington Post* reported, "When it comes to punishing sexual violence against women, surprisingly little has changed in a century. In many parts of Mexico, the penalty for stealing a cow is harsher than the punishment for rape." In 19 of Mexico's 31 states, the laws require that statutory rape charges be

New intelligence information suggests a developing al-Qaeda operation to conduct a mass-casualty terrorist event or series of events in Europe this summer.

Information obtained from diverse sources indicates that the terrorists may be planning to use unconventional biological or chemical weapons. Some intelligence agencies believe that the target of choice will almost certainly be the Olympic Games in Athens, where security is predicted to be suffocating but possibly ineffective. Athens aside, the alternative target of choice is Italy and the government of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. Italy is regarded as politically vulnerable because of widespread popular opposition to the Iraq War. It is also a uniquely symbolic target because Rome is home to the Vatican and the Catholic Church. An authentic Osama bin Laden audiotape broadcast in early April set the stage for an impending attack by offering a three-month suspension of violent activity in Europe contingent upon withdrawal of European troops from both Iraq and Afghanistan. Subsequent to the audiotape broadcast, the Italians intercepted a series of suspected terrorist communications that suggest Rome or Milan as probable targets of a summer terrorist attempt. Berlusconi, a strong George W. Bush supporter committed to remaining in Iraq following the June 30 deadline, has turned his country into an inviting target for al-Qaeda, with the continued Italian presence in Iraq serving as a pretext for the terrorist attack. Rome's support for the Iraq War has already been shaken by the taking of Italian hostages and by the devastating suicide truck-bombing of its forces in Nasiriyah. A successful al-Qaeda attack on the Italian mainland would make Berlusconi's position untenable.



Friends of Israel are turning up in the strangest places.

Dan Senor, Press Spokesman for Iraq occupation head Paul Bremer, is a former American Israel Public Affairs Committee intern who was widely perceived as a strong advocate of Israel when he served as deputy in the White House press office. Ahmad Chalabi, anointed by the Pentagon as Iraq's ruler-to-be, is also reported to be a man who knows how to help a friend, particularly when the friend is Ariel Sharon. Though many observers would blame Chalabi for the bad advice that has led to the current mayhem that is tearing Iraq apart, Chalabi's nephew Salem has now been placed in charge of the trial of Saddam Hussein. Salem is a partner in the law firm Zell and Feith, which is based in Jerusalem. Zell is a West Bank settler and Feith is our own highly esteemed Douglas Feith, who occasionally masquerades as Undersecretary of Defense for Planning. With Salem on board, the neocons and the Chalabi family will undoubtedly be pleased with the trial's outcome. Since the court proceeding is taking shape as an American-Israeli joint venture to benefit the Chalabis, there is speculation regarding Ahmad's enduring hold over the notoriously fickle affections of his neocon friends. There are rumors that the deservedly moribund pipeline project to send Iraqi oil to Haifa may again be on the table. ■

Philip Giraldi, a former CIA Officer, is a partner in Cannistraro Associates, an international security consultancy.

dropped if the rapist agrees to marry his victim.

The multicultural ideology that has been a byproduct of unprecedented levels of immigration from deeply different cultures is delusional at best, and at worst is likely to create social breakdown. Women should be alarmed since it is the advances in gender equality that are most immediately threatened by misogynous immigration. While few women would choose to live in a benighted society like Saudi Arabia or Pakistan, America admits thousands of persons yearly from those places. Yet there is no discussion in polite circles about what this influx might bring.

It must be mentioned that there is certainly an element of different class perspective here. A middle-class soccer mom is more likely to see a poorly educated Mexican as cheap help around the

drum about Taliban cruelty to women and girls long before the CNN cameras arrived. However, feminists have been strangely silent about the millions immigrating from misogynous cultures. And today's immigration is not like a century ago, when immigrants were expected to learn English and make an effort to become Americans. The current multicultural ethos encourages newcomers to remain in their ethnic enclaves since assimilation is racism according to some on the Left.

An important part of cultural adjustment is the acceptance of women as equal members of society—an aspect of our culture that is quite alien to many foreigners. So we hear stories of women managers in technology offices in Silicon Valley who are ignored and shunned by male colleagues from South Asia. A junior-college teacher in the same area

best feminist political philosopher in the world. She was very bold in her approach to the field and she was not afraid to take on the established view."

Okin wrote the breakthrough article "Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?" which was later the title for a book containing 16 essays from scholars answering that question. She was fearless in analyzing the real-world consequences of multicultural fantasies, pointing out that sensitivity to foreign cultures could be cruelty to women. Okin cited as an example the French government's permissiveness about admitting polygamous immigrants, which resulted in more than 200,000 polygamous families now living in Paris, where the multiple wives, who didn't much like polygamy in the home nation, were made additionally unhappy by far more crowded living conditions.

Professor Satz was kind enough to respond to my rather bleak observations about current feminist thinking on campus: "I think that the landscape is more complicated than you portray—there are many feminists who are critical of 'multi-culturalism' if by that you mean, as you suggest, cultural relativism. Susan Okin was the most prominent exponent of what might be called liberal feminism—feminism committed to liberal values of freedom and equality—but is not alone."

She explained further: "Perhaps one reason that some people have found the more extreme variants of cultural tolerance appealing is because the older alternative to multiculturalism looked like a problematic universalism which was really only based on a small set of values. So, it's a kind of over-corrective. Unfortunately, both the old one-sided universalism and the new cultural tolerance both leave women in the lurch."

It was a relief to learn that not all feminist academics are hopeless ideologues. Still, the campus as a whole is

WHILE FEW WOMEN WOULD CHOOSE TO LIVE IN A BENIGHTED SOCIETY LIKE SAUDI ARABIA OR PAKISTAN, AMERICA ADMITS THOUSANDS OF PERSONS YEARLY FROM THOSE PLACES. YET THERE IS NO DISCUSSION IN POLITE CIRCLES ABOUT WHAT THIS INFLUX MIGHT BRING.

house, a good thing. A blue-collar factory worker (if any still exist) may regard excess foreigners as a job threat since they function as voluntary near-slaves, willing to work for far below a survival wage by American standards. The middle-class woman hiring household help will be treated with respect as a check-writer, although she might find a different social dynamic if she takes the bus while the Volvo is being repaired.

Where are the feminist groups? Many feminists have been very aware of the terrible circumstances of their sisters abroad. For example, the Feminist Majority Foundation was beating the

had difficulty with some Arab men who were angered at receiving criticism from a woman and would follow her to her car to argue over grades in a threatening manner. A columnist was mildly angered when her Arab roofer refused to seal the deal by shaking hands with a female, though presumably he didn't mind getting paid by her.

In investigating the state of academic feminism, I was deeply saddened to learn of the death of Prof. Susan Moller Okin on March 3, which was a terrible loss for independent scholarship. Stanford colleague Prof. Debra Satz remarked, "She was perhaps the

not a cheerful place for those who don't fantasize about a utopian multicultural paradise. More importantly, the diversity delusion is bad for the nation as a whole and worse for women's rights and safety.

Instead of remaining in myopic denial, women should be leaders in advocating a modern version of assimilation. We certainly don't want to eradicate ethnic differences, but it is not the job of government or the educational system to protect foreign cultures. That task belongs in the immigrant family. Newcomers must understand that their social contract includes an acceptance of women as equals, and immigrants are expected to treat races other than their own with respect.

As a nation, America must embrace tough love and say that some cultural practices are not just different, they are wrong and criminal and will not be permitted. If a man believes he must have several wives, then there are many countries where he can marry to his heart's content, but he cannot live in the United States. There is no right to immigrate, and Americans have a need, like all peoples, to keep our own culture, despite the insistence of newcomers that we accommodate their ways.

American women have a proud history of working toward equal rights, freedom, and responsibility. Now is not the time to go wobbly because of the really bad idea of multiculturalism and its associated cultural relativism.

Far from being compatible, multiculturalism and women's rights are irrevocably opposed. In America, we can have multiculturalism or we can have women's equality. We can't have both. ■

Brenda Walker publishes two websites, www.LimitsToGrowth.org and www.ImmigrationsHumanCost.org, and is a member of the VDARE.com editorial collective.

Against the World

Bush has started something he can't finish.

By William Pfaff

WHEN THE HARVARD political scientist Samuel Huntington published his argument that the next world war would be a war between civilizations, I was one of those attacking his thesis as false and extremely dangerous.

My criticism was that civilizations are not responsible political actors, having no government, and that to talk of "wars" between them was like the 19th century's provocative and prejudicial talk about wars between races. Wars are made by national governments, led by responsible—or in the present American case, irresponsible—men and women.

Huntington seemed to be proposing the same argument as the Bosnian Serbs in the early 1990s, that cultural incompatibility with the Muslims of Bosnia made it necessary for them to destroy the latter.

I could not then imagine that a decade later the United States, through its expediently blind commitment to Israeli expansion into the Palestinian territories, and the Bush administration's acceptance of the neoconservatives' naïve enthusiasm for attacking Muslim states in order to save them, would have convinced practically all Arab and North African Muslims that America had determined to wage war on Islamic civilization.

Not that the Arab Middle East needed much convincing, after years of American mediation in the Israeli-Palestine conflict that never quite brought Washington to obstruct any Israeli initiative, however adventurous.

That affair, however, had been a tragedy from the start in which America had little responsibility. It was a collision of the irreproachable demand of European Jews for a refuge, after what had been done to them in Europe during the Second World War, and the irreproachable demand of the Palestinians not to have their land taken from them for a cause that had nothing to do with them.

The United States was able to maintain a certain fund of confidence among Muslims until fairly recently. On April 14, President Bush terminated, for purely electoral reasons, without public discussion or political debate, a 40-year-old American policy of declared evenhandedness in Palestine and support for international law, aligning the United States with Sharon government policies that are anathematized throughout the Islamic world, and condemned by virtually all of America's traditional allies.

When Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said five days later in Paris that as a consequence, "there now exists a hatred of Americans never equaled in this region," he did not exaggerate.

"So what?" the Washington authors of this policy reversal might reply. They are already wholly committed to the proposition that military power will trump all in the Middle East. They have yet to concede that this policy has already given the U.S. a failure in Iraq that coming months will confirm, and that the United States will pay heavily for in years to come.

The U.S. was fairly recently considered an ally of Islamic "nationalism." This was when the CIA recruited and supported Islamic fighters against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. At that point the U.S. was still thought a positive force in the attempt to settle the Israeli-Palestinian affair. The blunder that followed was the Pentagon's insistence on keeping American bases in Saudi Arabia following the Gulf War.

Afghanistan had mobilized committed, fundamentalist young Muslims—many from the European diaspora of partially Westernized Muslims—for whom war against the Russians in the cause of Islam was a solution to their own moral and identity crises.

They lived between two worlds, one of them, their own, stagnant and impoverished; the other, the West, seductive but morally repugnant. They became militants of an Islam reformed by returning to its sources.

The United States' insistence on having permanent bases on sacred Islamic land changed Muslims' view of the United States. Before, it was an expedient ally in the defense and liberation of Afghanistan.

Now it had become an invader.

That was enough for some Afghanistans veterans to organize attacks on their former allies, to drive them out of the land of Islam or punish them for being there. The rest is history.

Into this came George W. Bush and his wide-eyed administration. As he conclusively demonstrated in his April

pable of explaining, justifying, or rationalizing in categories other than those of moral righteousness and millenarian combat with evil.

About the practicalities of what we are doing in Iraq, what exactly we want, and how we are going to end this adventure, he had nothing to say. Others, he said, would let him know. On Israel-

BUSH HAS SHOWN HIMSELF INCAPABLE OF EXPLAINING, JUSTIFYING, OR RATIONALIZING IN CATEGORIES OTHER THAN THOSE OF MORAL RIGHTEOUSNESS AND MILLENARIAN COMBAT WITH EVIL.

13 press conference, however well meaning he may be, he was and remains ignorant of the world outside the United States, of history, and of foreign and military matters. Yet he is in a position in which he ultimately controls the conduct of the United States.

A neoconservative Republican intelligentsia, clever but obsessed with an ideology of American quasi-empire, exploited that ignorance to give the United States a war that Bush has shown himself inca-

Palestine, he placed his confidence, and the credit of the United States, with Ariel Sharon.

In the meantime, in evidence of the prevailing absence of common sense, the Marine Corps was ordered to attack Fallujah, a city of 300,000 people, in a punitive expedition meant to intimidate the population into identifying and handing over the men—whom the Marines themselves cannot precisely identify—responsible for the murder and mutilation of four American private security operatives. American troops simultaneously surrounded another city, Najaf, a Shi'ite shrine city, ordered to capture or kill a minor rabble-rousing cleric with a popular following among the poor of Baghdad.

In the past I thought Huntington not only wrong but a bad prophet. Who was going to launch a war of civilizations? Washington still thinks that it is liberating the Islamic world from what its culture has made it. The administration doesn't understand that this itself is a form of war on another civilization. To that it now is adding the Fallujahs and Najafs. ■

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Arts & Letters

FILM

[*Bobby Jones—Stroke of Genius*]

Fairway to Heaven

By Steve Sailer

ONLY THREE GOLFERS have made a substantial impression on non-golfers: Tiger Woods today, Arnold Palmer in the 1960s, and Bobby Jones in the 1920s, when he was one of the five horsemen of the first golden age of sports, along with Babe Ruth, Red Grange, Bill Tilden, and Jack Dempsey. The Georgia amateur is now memorialized in the solid little biopic "*Bobby Jones—Stroke of Genius*," starring Jim Caviezel of "*The Passion*."

Even mighty Jack Nicklaus meant little to those not bitten by the golf bug. Football, while complicated, so resembles two armies contesting a battlefield that newcomers can quickly grasp its appeal. But golf is a more curious affair that people either get or they don't. While most ball and stick games are played on standardized fields, golf courses are constructed at colossal expense to resemble, according to the latest sociobiological theory, our Stone Age mammoth-hunter ancestors' idea of a happy hunting ground.

The game is frustrating to put on screen. Each hole's action usually diminishes into anticlimax. A pro typically wallops a 290-yard drive, followed by a

150-yard approach, a 25-foot putt, and a six-inch tap-in. Fortunately, nongolfing spouses should be able to tolerate being dragged to the movie because Jones's human story was so strong.

Most of today's big-money sports emerged out of the Victorian era, but only golf retains many of its Victorian virtues. Even tennis, golf's country-club colleague, long ago surrendered to its stars' on-court tantrums. Jones, who once lost a U.S. Open title by penalizing himself for accidentally moving his ball such a negligible distance that no one else saw it, is the man most responsible for golf's continuing traditionalism. Jones was the idol of Nicklaus, who is in turn the idol of Woods, so Jones's style is likely to live on.

Caviezel, who was so memorable as Jesus, here plays a man who was also greatly admired. During his 95-year lifespan, the late Alistair Cooke met countless prominent people. Yet Cooke called Jones "one of the three or four finest human beings I've ever known ... A whole team of investigative reporters, working in shifts like coal miners, would find that in all of Jones's life ... he nothing common did or mean ... Bob Jones radiated goodness, yet without a smidgen of piety."

Jones, a Georgia amateur, exemplified the best in the Southern gentleman, the sporting equivalent of Generals Washington, Lee, and Marshall. This paladin was not just the greatest player of the mashie-niblick era, but also a lawyer who often argued before the Supreme Court, a gifted prose stylist, a lieutenant colonel in WWII, and founder of both the world's most prestigious golf club, Augusta National, and most exciting tournament, the Masters.

Indeed, some have argued that golf, a notoriously time-consuming sport, con-

tributed to the downfall of the WASP ascendancy. Jones, though, played an average of only once or twice per week during his competitive career, which concluded in 1930 when he was merely 28 with his never-equalled Grand Slam of winning all four major championships.

Paradoxically, golf was the one thing that didn't come easy to this paragon. At age 14 he electrified the sporting world by nearly winning the U.S. Amateur. No golfer, not even Woods, was the object of more pressure to triumph at a younger age than Jones (at least until 14-year-old Hawaiian prodigy Michelle Wie arrived last year). But for seven lean years, Jones had to grow up in public as he struggled to control the temper that made him a club-throwing terror on the links. When a flung iron accidentally struck a lady spectator, he was suspended by United States Golf Association president George Walker (great-grandfather of United States president George Walker Bush).

Even during the subsequent seven fat years when he won 13 of the 21 major championships he entered, he was tormented by his sensitive emotions, which caused him to lose 15 pounds during tournaments, and by his declining health, which eventually put him in a wheelchair three years after he returned from combat in Normandy.

In a film without villains, drama is delivered by stressing Jones's pain. For cinematic suffering, Caviezel is definitely the new go-to guy. Refreshingly, in his dialogue with Jeremy Northam, who steals scenes as Jones's opposite, rival, and friend, the raffish pro Walter Hagen, Caviezel also achieves delightful screen chemistry. ■

Rated PG for post-foozled shot expletives.

BOOKS

[*How Israel Lost*, Richard Ben Cramer, Simon & Schuster, 307 pages]

A Friend's Lament

By Scott McConnell

IN THIS SNAPPILY WRITTEN book, Richard Ben Cramer argues that Israel has been corrupted by its 37-year-long occupation of the Palestinian territory on the West Bank and Gaza. The occupation has diverted the country from its historic mission—providing “a place where Jews could live the best life ... in accordance with their values”—to something less ambitious and admirable. Its energies and spirit sapped by measures to control an embittered foreign population, Israeli life has begun to coarsen. Some of the consequences are internal: domestic assaults, road-rage killings, school violence, are now part of the social texture. The once appealing smallness of the country, Israel as a modern village in which everyone felt mutually connected, is now gone. Gone too are such noble aspirations as the doctrine of “purity of arms” through which the army tried hard to avoid harming innocent Arab civilians; some of today’s top commanders don’t even pretend to care. Cramer writes with great empathy about the life Israel has inflicted on the Palestinians, a captive people, shut off from all foreign contacts, locked into a hopelessly uneven contest against one of the best armies in the world.

Though seldom voiced in the United States, such arguments are expressed often by Israelis unreconciled to Likud’s policies. In Cramer’s colloquial American idiom, they are sharp and refreshing. The “How Israel Lost” of the title sets down a challenge for admirers of

Begin, Shamir, Netanyahu, and Sharon (including, it is now clear, George W. Bush) who would deny that Israel has suffered meaningful loss at all. But Cramer recalls how luminous Israel’s reputation used to be in the United States and in much of the world, and that clearly has been lost. Was that reputation entirely deserved? “A land without people for a people without land”—this was the most commonly heard shorthand for the Zionist project 40 or 50 years ago. It was popularized in the movie “Exodus,” with Paul Newman as a Jewish underground fighter and “shiksa-goddess Eva Marie Saint as his home-from-the-holocaust honey” (a clause which could come with a “don’t try this yourself” warning). But the “land without people” slogan was an element of what Cramer calls “hasbarah”—Hebrew for “explaining” or spin—and one of the Jewish state’s most successful exports. This bit of *hasbarah* was a work of genius, as deeply burrowed into the American subconscious in the 1950s and ’60s as (Cramer puckishly notes) “Winston tastes good, like a cigarette should.” Back then, most of America felt part of Israel’s venture.

That sentiment is almost entirely gone. Relatively few believe the land of Palestine was “without people”—and while there is scant perception of moral equivalence between Israel and the

Inquirer’s Mideast correspondent. He arrived buying into the whole *hasbarah* package but as he looked around him it began to wear off. He began to write in his paper about the Arabs—who were, quite often, hospitable, dignified, rational, and oppressed. Above all, they were there. His pieces earned him a Pulitzer prize ... and several campaigns by committees of Jews trying to lose him his job. “Is it really Ibn Cramer?” they would ask.

The argument of this book is drawn mostly through the portraits and stories of individual Jews and Arabs. Cramer has a real gift for bringing to life the people caught up in the endless struggle—even, or indeed especially those whose politics are not his own. His portraits are usually sympathetic (Mariam Farhat, the “mother of martyrs,” a Palestinian woman who has raised several suicide bombers, is an exception); some, like that of Menachem Furman, a charismatic leader a West Bank settlement, are exquisite. The portrait of Yehuda Meshi-Zahav, an ultra-orthodox Jew who has organized the ultra-orthodox *haredim* to gather body parts of the victims of terror bombings for ritually proper burial, seemed to me journalism as an act of love.

Nonetheless, the backdrop to all these conversations is an occupation that impinges on Palestinian life at every

“A LAND WITHOUT PEOPLE FOR A PEOPLE WITHOUT LAND” WAS A WORK OF GENIUS, AS DEEPLY BURROWED INTO THE AMERICAN SUBCONSCIOUS IN THE 1950S AND ’60S AS “WINSTON TASTES GOOD, LIKE A CIGARETTE SHOULD.”

Palestinians, no Israeli (or American) leader is now likely to say, as Golda Meir once did, “There are no Palestinians.” Yes, Golda, there are, several million in the West Bank or dispersed throughout the world, many with the keys and title deeds to what were once their families’ homes.

Cramer discovered this for himself in the late ’70s, as the *Philadelphia*

level—shutting off three million largely innocent people. When Sharon completes his fence, Palestinian encirclement will be complete. The most banal journey in the West Bank is determined by Israeli military checkpoints. Cramer describes the trip of one Palestinian man who sets out to visit his elderly mother thirty miles away. He wants to avoid the checkpoints (which can take hours), so he tacks back

and forth, up a riverbed, through a town, six separate taxis for the journey. Finally near the end, he climbs up a pile of stones to find an Israeli half-track and a soldier with a machine gun on the other side. Ordered to pull up his shirt to show he wasn't carrying a bomb, the Palestinian just froze. "Shy?" the soldier asked. "No, I am ashamed," was the reply. The soldier shrugged and let him pass—the man, whose journey had taken four hours, happened to be the newly appointed Palestinian minister of labor.

Arabs stopped at the checkpoints aren't always as fortunate as the minister. There is the elderly headmaster of a Palestinian school whom the Israelis regularly force to strip—in order to humiliate him in front of his students. As a Russian Israeli manning the checkpoints explains, "Because the bad attitude—you know? If they are acting like they are good, and we are the bad one. Then, you must show them control." Then there are other incidents, as when a Palestinian talks back in too fluent Hebrew, protesting against the soldiers who were throwing rocks at his rented car to amuse themselves. For his protest, he was shot in the head at close range.

Two poignant stories function as bookends, demonstrating how the conflict has worn down the morals of both sides. One is Kandil's, just a boy when the Israeli troops entered his village in June 1967. He noted to his surprise that the Jews didn't have tails, as he had been taught. Indeed, they seemed friendly enough, and within months Kandil and his friends used to cross the Green Line to play soccer with Israeli kids on a nicely leveled field. He later found employment at an Israeli nature reserve, learned to read and write Hebrew. When the second Intifada erupted, he ignored warnings to stop working for the "Zionist occupier." One day he was told to report to Palestinian Authority headquarters in Ramallah, where he was taken in and beaten daily for two weeks and hung from a hook during the evenings. Finally he signed a blank sheet paper, which was turned into a confession for informing on Palestinian militants. He was rescued

only when Israeli tanks entered Arafat's compound in 2002.

The parallel tale, similar in spirit though mercifully lacking the sheer brutality, is that of Yossi, an Israeli art dealer from Tel Aviv. With his wife pregnant, Yossi was tempted by the prospect of subsidized housing in one of the new settlements near Jerusalem. But he didn't quite fit in, preferring not to go out in the evening with his fellow settlers and shoot holes in the hot-water tanks of his Arab neighbors for amusement. An artistic type, he also he didn't want a pre-fab house, but one built of stone, by craftsmen. He befriended the Arab artisans who lived nearby. As punishment for this fraternization, the settlement moved his trailer outside the fence. But Yossi found he could get along fine with the Palestinians—eventually proposing that the settlement create a joint kindergarten for Jews and Arabs. It was roughly at this point that the settler kids began saying "the house is unclean" and killed Yossi's ducks and geese—finally his new house was burned down. Harassment and arson quite clearly do not equal torture, but the two tales are driven by a quite parallel emotion.

During the 1980's, Cramer said he was optimistic about a peaceful solution. Israel could give up the territories, which would involve a fight with other Jews—the right-wing settlers—but they then were few in number. Or it could try to kill or expel millions of Arabs, which was "a tad Nazi-ish." Or it could hang on to the land and develop a policy of apartheid. The logic of the first choice was compelling—however, a conflict with other Jews was distasteful. But abrupt end of the Cold War and the arrival of a million "Jewish" immigrants from the Soviet Union suddenly made option three possible, at least for a while, and that is what the state has done.

Yet Cramer believes a peace is still possible. Palestinians are not especially religious and not committed to religious-based Jew-hatred; the conflict is entirely about land. Widespread anti-Israeli terrorism began only after Israel committed itself to a wholesale policy of

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expanding settlements, assassinations, and land appropriation—that is when expansion of Israeli settlement of the West Bank became the driving impulse of the Jewish state.

Cramer is one of the very few authors to deflate the myth of Ehud Barak's "perfect" peace offer at Camp David in 2000—97 percent of the land, an offer that Arafat rejected as "less than a Bantustan, for your information." Arafat and his cronies usually appear as self-serving thugs in Cramer's narrative, and yet on this question the PA chairman had a point. What Barak offered was to keep 6 percent of the West Bank, give the Palestinians 3 percent from some Israeli desert. The so-called nation of Palestine was to consist of three separate ghettos, each walled off by Israeli checkpoints and bases—so a citizen of "Palestine" couldn't go about his country without Israeli permission. In addition, Israel proposed to keep military bases on the far (Jordan) side of "Palestine" and control of the aquifers and the new nation's scarce water supply. Cramer acidly comments that the Barak proposal would have allowed Israel to continue the occupation policy under another name, "Palestine."

And yet, since the issue is territory (and honor), compromise remains possible. It would center on a slogan everyone knows would be a winner—Give Back the Land. Not the land "except for the settlements," or the land "except for the bases," but all of it. Of course one can hear all the think-tank experts decrying the idea as simplistic or worse. But I am with Cramer here—such a step would transform the Middle East (and America's now wretched image there)—and make Israel a better country as well.

This is a wonderful book, courageous and honest—though courage and honesty hardly suffice to make a book good. Cramer has brought Israelis and Arabs alive in his pages, effortlessly passing on to the reader his own deep affections. He writes as a Jew and lover of Israel, but is utterly persuasive in his argument that the occupation is gobbling up the soul of the state. ■

[*St. Patrick of Ireland*, Philip M. Freeman, Simon and Schuster, 216 pages]

Beyond Green Beer

By Philip Jenkins

COLMCILLE, KEVIN, COLUMBANUS, BRIGID, PATRICK ... for several centuries after the fall of the Roman Empire, Ireland produced many of the greatest and most inspiring figures in the Christian story. The gravesites and shrines of these saints would become the centers of both secular and spiritual power for this amazingly vibrant and learned culture. From their Irish homeland, the devotees of these legendary founders crisscrossed Europe, establishing new monasteries and churches.

The story has been told often enough, and the age of "Saints and Scholars" is dazzling even without the perennial exaggerations and tall tales. No, the Irish monasteries did not safeguard the cultural relics of late antiquity ready for rediscovery once the worst of the Dark Ages had ended in the rest of Europe: in that sense at least, *pace* Thomas Cahill, the Irish did not "save civilization." Nor did Ireland preserve ancient and more authentic forms of Christianity that were elsewhere swamped by the medieval Catholic Church. The early Irish church was not proto-Protestant, nor was it a haven for mystical or feminist currents supposedly retained from the time of Jesus; the Culdees were neither Gnostics nor crypto-Buddhists. The leaders of the Irish church never doubted that they were part of the universal Great Church that looked to the successors of Peter. All the Irish did that was different—and this was quite an "all"—was to maintain a highly literate and creative Christian civilization at a time when learning was fading away across Western Europe.

The Irish contribution to Christian civilization is immense, but it is odd that

it has come to be epitomized by St. Patrick. Patrick himself has of course become the global symbol of Irishness, an ethnic totem often associated today with partying and heavy drinking. But virtually everything his modern adherents know about Patrick is factually wrong, and that statement does not just apply to the expulsion of the snakes. Crucially, he did not bring Christianity to Ireland. However we date Patrick's life—and exact chronology is notoriously difficult—his mission began after the arrival of one Palladius, who in 431 was "consecrated by Pope Celestine and sent to the Scots [Irish] believing in Christ, as their first bishop." First there were Christian communities, then there was Palladius, then there was Patrick—and possibly a great many more of their kind, whose names are now lost. Nor, through most of the Middle Ages, was Patrick regarded as any kind of national Irish symbol, rather than one great saint out of many. Certainly his shrine at Armagh was hugely venerated, but no more than other centers such as Clonmacnois, Glendalough, Kildare, and the island of Iona. The later glory of Patrick reflects the political triumphs of his medieval successors at Armagh.

To this extent, we can reasonably speak of a myth of St. Patrick. But as Philip Freeman shows in his readable biography, even when we strip away the later tales, the original Patrick still demands our close attention. The story is familiar. Patricius was a Romano-Briton of respectable family, the son and grandson of Christian clergy. As an adolescent he was kidnapped by Irish slavers. After some years, he escaped and returned to his native land, but he was induced to go once more to Ireland to build the cause of Christianity. Though his mission achieved much, he was criticized for what looked like questionable financial dealings. The benefit of this controversy was that it drove Patrick to produce one of the most remarkable literary texts from an otherwise very dark period, his *Confession*. His other monument was a *Letter to the Soldiers of Coroticus*, a blistering

condemnation of Romano-British Christians who had attacked Ireland and carried off Christian Irish captives. Freeman wisely includes both the *Confession* and the *Letter* in full, and no offense is intended to the modern author when I say that these precious pages are worth more than all the

on territorial units and well-known hierarchies. Terms like vicar and diocese belong firmly to the political world of late Rome, and naturally, bishoprics coincided with provinces and dioceses. But what was to happen when the religion moved into regions Caesar never knew, where state organization was

see from the *Confession* the incipient tensions between the Old and New World Orders with which the church had to deal. Patrick had to handle the kinglets and overlords of a strange Celtic world in which gift giving was a fundamental social reality. But what was essential in Ireland seemed like vulgar bribery to the conservative bishops of sub-Roman Gaul and Britain. And did Patrick follow all the niceties of church law? Worst of all, why did he even want to go preaching among barbarians, rather than remaining within the safe and known lands of Christendom, where these risky religious experiments would not be necessary? In modern terms, the critique of Patrick must have made him sound like a kind of shady cult-leader, perhaps an Elmer Gantry figure. Certainly not the sort you would want for a commencement speaker at a decent Christian college.

With all the patience at his command—which was not immense—Patrick explained to his critics the practical realities of operating in this very different kind of emerging Christian society. Had he spent money on gifts?

WHY DID HE EVEN WANT TO GO **PREACHING AMONG BARBARIANS**, RATHER THAN REMAINING WITHIN THE **SAFE AND KNOWN LANDS OF CHRISTENDOM**, WHERE THESE **RISKY RELIGIOUS EXPERIMENTS** WOULD NOT BE NECESSARY?

modern scholarly writings on Patrick combined. Freeman's translations, by the way, are fresh and colloquial.

So little is known of Patrick's world that much of Freeman's book inevitably has to draw from far and wide to offer any hints of context. After all, we cannot date Patrick's career with any certainty within a half-century. Freeman thus writes about Celtic archaeology for the five or six centuries before Patrick's time, discusses the rise and fall of Roman Britain—but ultimately, like any modern Patrician, his book must be a commentary on those two key texts, the *Letter* and the *Confession*. And it is here that the book acquires its greatest interest. Knowing Freeman's scholarly record, I expected, and got, a perceptive account free of the usual myths and excessive pieties. What surprised me was the extraordinary modernity of Patrick's writings.

The word "modern" might sound strange in the context of the fifth century, but recall that in those times too, Christianity was moving outside the world with which it had always been familiar, into lands that lay literally and metaphorically beyond the borders. In 450, the faith was growing rapidly outside the failing Roman Empire; today, new heartlands of Christianity are emerging in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. In both cases, new social and political structures must be confronted.

Western Christianity established itself in a Roman world that was firmly based

flimsy, and territorial states meant little besides structures of clan and kinship? Territorial dioceses enjoyed a tenuous existence in Ireland for a century or so, before the church came to be dominated by abbots and monasteries, each claiming the spiritual inheritance of a given saint. The basic unit of the church would be the federation of religious houses, the *paruchia*, each owing allegiance to the heir of Patrick, Brigid, or Kevin.

Though this particular model emerged only after Patrick's time, we can already



"I'm lousy at spelling because of my parents.
They grew up listening to the Beatles, Monkees and Byrds!"

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He certainly had. In fact, "I'm not sorry that I paid out bribes—in fact I'm not finished yet. I spend money now and will spend even more. By the power of God, I may even spend my life for your souls."

Reading the *Confession*, the modern reader might well think of a modern-day preacher or bishop in Africa or Asia reacting to charges that he had betrayed the financial or doctrinal standards prevailing in London or Los Angeles. Yes, of course, the modern-day critics might say, you have all these followers. But how sincere are their conversions? What kind of Christianity is this, anyway? Aren't you just preaching a new kind of syncretism? Ah, if only you'd had more systematic exposure to a good higher education when you were young. Anyway, do you *really* feel that missions are still justified, with all their imperialist connotations? Don't you understand that we don't live in the days of the Roman Empire any more—I'm sorry, I mean the British and French empires?

Though it is always sad to note the loss of historical documents and sources, it is somewhat pleasant to record that we have no surviving copies of the learned polemics against Patrick. Those writings, and their authors, have faded into oblivion, while the response of the embattled missionary leader on the borderlands is one of the most famous documents surviving from that age. A contemporary Catholic thinker, Virgilio Elizondo, has enunciated his "Galilee Principle," which asserts, "what human beings reject, God chooses as his very own." He could have been thinking of that "unlearned sinner," Patrick of Armagh.

Equally contemporary in its way is the *Letter to the Soldiers of Coroticus*, which challenges a Christian state that has dared to make war on fellow believers. Even the title of the letter proclaims Patrick's rage and contempt. He should have written to his "fellow Romans," but instead, "Notice I don't call you 'my fellow Romans'—No, your crimes have made you citizens of Hell. You live like the worst barbarians,

including your Pictish friends. ... Your hands drip with the blood of the innocent Christians you have murdered—the very Christians I nourished and brought to God." Calling someone a "barbarian" today is less than polite; in the British Isles in 450, it meant reading someone out of the human race. As for the murdered Irish Christians, they would dwell in paradise, and "rule over wicked kings."

Patrick had probably never heard of St. Augustine, a man who lived a generation or two before his time, but the questions he was asking would have been very familiar to the African saint. What exactly makes a Christian state, a Christian ruler? The question is well summarized by the 20th-century Anglican poet and theologian Charles Williams, who explored the conflict between Christians and pagans in his Arthurian epic cycle *The Region Of The Summer Stars*. In one poem, a Dark Age Pope asks in his prayers:

Where is the difference between us?
What does the line along the rivers
define?
Causes and catapults they have and
we have,
And the death of a brave beauty is
mutual everywhere.

Causes and catapults, civilizing missions, and cruise missiles. When does a Christian state rule, or fight, in a way that means it has ceased to be Christian? The questions are still valid.

Philip Freeman's book can be thoroughly recommended as a fascinating story of a truly great figure we can know as intimately as perhaps anyone else who lived in that dreadful era. But readers should take caution: if they are not careful, they will move beyond the realm of distant antiquity and will find themselves asking distinctly modern questions. ■

Philip Jenkins is a professor of history and religious studies at Pennsylvania State University. He is the author of The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity.

[*The Just War: An American Reflection on the Morality of War in Our Time*, Peter S. Temes, Ivan R. Dee, 217 pages]

The Rules of War

By David Gordon

PRESIDENT BUSH'S INVASION of Iraq has forced Americans to confront issues of war and peace with an urgent concern unmatched since the height of the Cold War. Under what conditions does the policy of an unfriendly government become a threat that justifies preemptive war? Do we have a duty to spread democracy and "human rights" to the world?

Faced with such quandaries, we are perplexed; but good news lies at hand. Peter Temes is here to help. As he several times informs us, he has taught classes on "Moral Principles of War" at Harvard and other august institutions. Our author formerly headed the Great Books Foundation, and he proposes to survey the teachings of philosophy and religion for the guidance they may offer. Temes devotes most attention to the Catholic doctrine of just war, the most influential body of thinking on the subject, but he discusses Jewish and Islamic views as well.

Our wide-ranging author by no means confines himself to religious thinkers. Secular philosophers such as Kant have not escaped Temes's scrutiny. He also does not limit himself to an exposition of the thought of the various writers he covers. He endeavors, with what results we shall soon discover, to portray the historical background against which his subjects wrote.

Having considered the wisdom of the past, Temes is then in position to guide us to a new synthesis. He proposes new criteria of just war that significantly modify the traditional doctrine. Temes's project could hardly be more important and timely. With what success has he carried out his ambitious task?

Readers of this book will soon discover the sad answer to our query. Temes rightly discerns that the principle of “double effect” lies at the heart of the just-war tradition developed by St. Augustine and St. Thomas and continued by later Catholic writers. The principle can probably best be explained through an example. Suppose a nation, at war for a just cause, wishes to bomb the enemy’s arsenal. Unfortunately, civilians live near the arsenal, and the bombing will kill some of them. Does this make the bombings morally impermissible?

allow the use of bad means to attain good ends. The whole point of the principle is that the action that you intend does not use the foreseen bad consequence as a means. In the example just given, bombing the arsenal does not take place through killing the civilians.

Because he lacks an elementary grasp of double effect, Temes ascribes to Augustine and Aquinas a contradiction that exists only in his own mind. Our author is aware that the just-war theorists deny that they favor the use of evil means to achieve good, but he knows

only they know as keepers of the whispered knowledge given to Moses and passed from generation to generation among the rabbinate. ... They know what others don’t; debate can be pursued only so far; a challenge to a rabbi can be credible only to a point.” Amazingly, Temes appears not to know that the Oral Law has been fully available in writing for over 1500 years. (He does refer to “the written essence of the oral Torah” but fails to see its implications for his contention.)

Protestant thinkers fare no better. Temes, with a great show of indignation, informs us that Reinhold Niebuhr favored a nuclear first strike against Russia. Temes cites no text in support of this astonishing claim. Suffice it to say that Niebuhr, always in agony over real and imagined ambiguities, was no more than a critical supporter of American policy during the Cold War.

I must not be unfair to Temes: he distorts the views of secular as well as religious thinkers. He wrongly claims that Kant favored world government. In fact, as Kant makes clear in his *Perpetual Peace*, he supported a federation of free

TEMES’S MISUNDERSTANDING OF JUST-WAR THEORY LEADS HIM TO CONTRIVE AN EXPLANATION FOR A PROBLEM THAT DOES NOT EXIST.

Not necessarily. To aim directly at the death of innocents is absolutely forbidden, according to the traditional view, but here killing the civilians is not the goal of the bombers. Quite the contrary, bombing the arsenal could proceed just as well, if not better, if the civilians were absent from the scene. Their deaths are a foreseen consequence of the bombing, but are not something directly sought. The principle of double effect allows such killings, under severe restrictions. The bad foreseen consequence, for example, must be proportional to the good sought. Double effect will not permit you to hit someone’s head with a hammer to swat a fly, nor to risk the lives of civilians based on idle speculation about weapons of mass destruction.

Agree with it or not, the principle is quite straightforward, but Temes botches it in a manner that is remarkable to behold. “More to the point,” he tells us, “Augustine finessed the obvious contradiction between means and ends: he allowed that evil might not be evil if in service to grace—a concept that came to be known as the idea of ‘double effect’ in the vocabulary of Just War philosophy.”

Temes has things exactly backwards. The principle of double effect does *not*

better than they the implications of their doctrine.

The just-war writers, he holds, were concerned with how man gets to heaven. They accordingly did not want to admit that they condoned the use of evil means. Temes, lacking an interest in salvation, can be realistic. “So in some cases war is not a sin, Augustine and Aquinas say, because if a war meets the criteria of Just War, it is not only the pursuit of peace but a peaceful pursuit. Recall, though, that both Augustine and Aquinas were talking about war within the larger context of Christianity. The Christian goal of all human behavior was to live good lives, and to go to heaven.” Temes’s misunderstanding of just-war theory leads him to contrive an explanation for a problem that does not exist.

One must, though, give Temes credit: his distortion of religion is not confined to Catholic writers. He is an equal-opportunity bumbler. In his view, the Oral Law in Judaism is an instrument for rabbis to control the laity. “The very idea of the oral Torah creates special privilege and authority for the rabbi. Any Jewish man ... may study the Torah and other religious texts and become expert in Jewish ideas. But the rabbis have something more, something secret that

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and independent states. He opposed a unified world political regime as likely to lead to despotism.

Temes as a historian of thought is, shall we say, somewhat lacking; but perhaps he is better as an original thinker. Except for his work on Leibniz, Bertrand Russell is not a reliable source on the views of past thinkers, but he was a major philosopher nonetheless.

Our hopes are soon disappointed. Temes wishes to revise the traditional just-war criteria, but his changes hardly strike one as improvements. He places greatest stress on his demand that the reason for a war must be "about the future, not about the past." If a nation goes to war—perish the thought—to regain lost territory, it has in the view of our author sinned grievously. Such matters are of mere historical interest, and they do not justify taking life. Instead, a just war must attempt to right a moral wrong.

Thus, Abraham Lincoln was wrong to use force to compel the Southern states to rejoin the Union. How can a mere constitutional issue justify violence? Matters changed entirely, though, once Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. What could be more just than a

crusade against slavery? "Abraham Lincoln, Marx correctly observed, had discovered the moral logic of the Civil War as its new purpose, rather than the merely constitutional. Lincoln had first portrayed the essence of the war as the preservation of the nation, but midway through ... his rhetoric moved from the state-engineering notion that a house divided against itself cannot stand to the belated moral clarity of the Emancipation Proclamation."

IF SLAVERY IS A MORAL WRONG, THEN WOULD NOT A FOREIGN POWER HAVE BEEN JUSTIFIED IN INVADING THE UNITED STATES TO BRING SLAVERY TO AN END?

Our inaccurate author has here outdone himself. He appears not to know that Lincoln's House Divided speech was a protest against slavery. But this is by the way. Turning to Temes's principal contention, is it not vulnerable to a fatal counterexample? If righting a moral wrong suffices to justify a war, and slavery is a moral wrong, then would not a foreign power have been justified in invading the United States to bring slavery to an end?

One of Temes's students at Harvard raised exactly this difficulty, and his response to it is revealing of his mindset. "A student challenged my proposition that respect for life was a higher good than national sovereignty. In that case, he said, I'd be forced to support an invasion of the United States, by, as an example, France in 1830 if their invasion sought to free American slaves. Well, of course I would have to support that, I replied, and I assumed that everyone

around the table would as well. Yet few agreed with me, though I still hold this opinion firmly."

Our author does not disappoint those curious about how his version of moral fanaticism applies to the Iraq War. He thinks, commendably, that the actual conduct of the war has "failed to meet the test" of justice. American military operations have not protected adequately the lives of Iraqi civilians. But a war to depose Saddam Hussein was just, so long as its aim was to overthrow a tyrant rather than, sordidly, to advance American interests. "So we can quickly answer the question of whether some kind of war against Saddam was just—the answer is yes, just as a war against the Nazi leadership of Germany was just ... all in the name of coming to the aid of millions of innocents suffering under the misrule of their own nation's leaders."

Temes's utter subordination of our country's national integrity to vague moral crusading is as repellent as his philosophical and historical errors are amusing. To Scott's enquiry, "Breathes there the man with soul so dead, who never to himself hath said, This is mine own, my native land," Temes would no doubt respond, "You bet: right here." ■

David Gordon is a Senior Fellow of the Ludwig von Mises Institute and editor of The Mises Review.



"You missed 247 calls. Your cat has learned how to use the speed-dial button and she sounds hungry!"

American Gigolo



So there's always a first time. If John Kerry wins in November, he will be the premiere president of this great country of ours to be also a gigolo.

The dictionary defines "gigolo" as a man supported by a woman in return for his sexual attentions and companionship. It might sound rough for John Kerry, but it's right to the point. Let's face it. The 44th president (maybe) is as close to a gigolo as I can think of, and I have known many. In fact, my best friend and best man for my first marriage to the beautiful French countess Cristina de Caraman, was the numero uno gigolo of his time, the fabled Porfirio Rubirosa.

Mind you, being a gigolo is no picnic. The "little woman," as the ultimate provider, has the last word. None of this "I am the man of the house" stuff applies. She who pays the bills decides, and if you don't believe me, become a fly on the wall of the Kerry household. Teresa got her moolah the old-fashioned way, she married into it, and so has Kerry. Even in his first marriage, to Julia Thorn, he was number two in the providing stakes.

In the United States, the word gigolo has lousy connotations. A man who lives off his wife is looked down upon by hard-working Americans used to making their own way. In decadent Europe, it's almost a compliment. Blenheim Palace was rescued earlier in the past century when the then Duke of Marlborough came over here and married the beautiful Consuelo Vanderbilt. She got a historic title, and he got a new roof for his palace and walking around cash. Alas, the union did not work out. They seldom do. Marlborough took Consuelo for

granted, a glorified cash machine. She walked. But the roof is still there, as are the trust funds for his descendants.

My friend Alexander Hesketh, ex-whip in the House of Lords before Tony Blair turned that wonderful upper house into a Tony's cronies yes-chamber, dines out on his grandfather's trip aboard his yacht to San Francisco. Old Lord Hesketh was desperate. His finances were in worse shape than his yacht, which sunk of dry-rot in the San Francisco harbor just as the wedding to a rich American heiress was sealed. Alexander and his brother are still enjoying the fruits of that particular merger.

Most gigolos I have known have been great charmers. Charm goes with the territory. Manliness, too. In America gigolos are seen as effete walkers of old ladies, but once upon a time, especially in the old continent, gigolos had not only to be good dancers, but also tough guys. Most of them were good athletes, polo players, race car drivers, and tennis players. Golfers made lousy gigolos. Too much time on the links. Rubi was a terrific polo player, a very competent racing driver, and a hell of a boxer. We used to work our polo ponies in the morning, have lunch in town (Paris), and then box a few rounds before dinner. He married three very rich ladies, Flor Trujillo, Doris Duke, and Barbara Hutton, took their money and spent it on beautiful, young, but poor women. (He also got a Dakota airplane, 80 suits, and a string of polo ponies.)

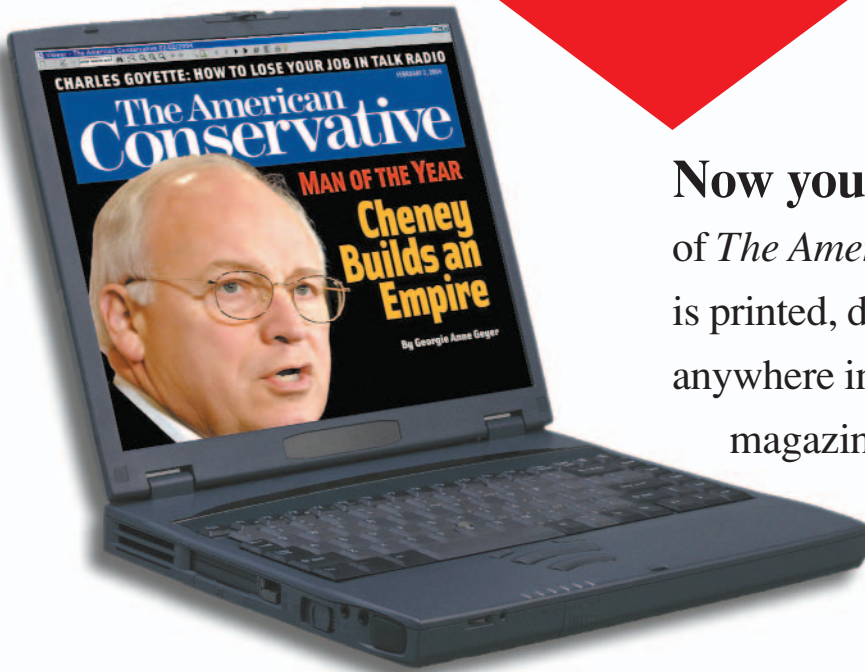
Like Kerry, Rubi picked up small bills

and left the big ones to the wife. Unlike Kerry, however, Rubi was a straight shooter. He openly sang "I'm a Gigolo," a popular French song of the time and admitted that he took from the rich and spent it on the poor. He was known never to lie to a man and never to tell the truth to a woman. Hear, hear! Kerry is the opposite. He has told more whoppers and flipped-flopped on more issues than any of the liars inside the Beltway, yet I somehow envision him telling the truth to women. "You must understand, dear Teresa, I love you madly but I cannot keep you in the style dear John did, so unless you're prepared to live like me, searching and searching for a place to live, however uncomfortably, we should not keep seeing each other..." Or words to that effect.

And of course it worked. An \$8 million Idaho chalet on five acres; a \$12 million Nantucket waterfront beach house; a \$6 million Washington, D.C. 23-room townhouse; a \$14 million, 90 acre Pennsylvania colonial compound; and a \$12 million Beacon Hill, Boston mansion just for starters. Not to mention the Gulfstream jet and other accessories those who were not born into them yearn for. Kerry's lies, and they are almost Clintonesque, are very significant in the context of his lifestyle. He will do and say anything to get his way, to hell with principles and standards.

Both Kerry and Clinton learned to lie early and often, and have continued the practice because it has served both men very well. When Clinton was elected, I was the first to refer to him not by his name but as the draft-dodger. If Kerry wins the prize, he will be known in this space as the gigolo, or Mr. Flip-Flop. Better yet, the flip-flop gigolo. ■

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